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# MID-AMERICA

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## Francis Parkman on the Nature of Man

Francis Parkman stands at the front rank of America's Nineteenth Century historians. New facts may be added to the existing knowledge of the titanic Anglo-French struggle for North America which he recorded. Certainly new interpretations of greater significance for later generations are yet to appear. None of this, however, alters the unusual durability of the Parkman histories. Few studies of the human record have promised to stand the test of time as well as the works of this brilliant New England scholar.

The magnificent volumes of Parkman's work are naturally the result of a painstaking accumulation of evidence. Even more, of course, these studies are the product of their author's incisive mind. So significant, indeed, is Parkman's role in American scholarship that both the casual and the serious student of American history have almost as much interest in the development of Parkman's thinking as they have in his actual histories.

Of particular interest is the problem of Parkman's ideas on the nature of man. Concepts of human nature are important because they form basic assumptions which do a great deal to determine the social, political, economic, and religious ideas of all men. To understand Parkman's own view of human nature is, therefore, to have a more complete grasp of the significance of his historical scholarship.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the only summary of the history of the idea of "Human Nature in American Thought," see the two excellent articles by Merle Curti. These are, "The Age of Reason and Morality, 1750-1860," *Political Science Quarterly*, LXVIII (September, 1953), 354-375; and "The Retreat From Reason in the Age of Science," *Ibid.*, LXVIII (December, 1953), 492-510. For an application of the human nature analysis to the thought of one man, see also Curti's "Woodrow Wilson's Concept of Human Nature," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, I (May, 1957), 1-19.

There is, for example, much in Parkman's voluminous writing which appears to justify the belief that he was staunchly anti-democratic. Certainly it is true that he was highly critical of a great deal of the American society in which he lived. It is possible, however, that an examination of Parkman's ideas of human nature will force an alteration or a modification of the impression that he was anti-democratic. At the very least, the study will provide a deeper understanding of those views.

Parkman's non-historical writings<sup>2</sup> reveal at once that he made a basic distinction between a fundamental nature common to all men and the diversities of character resulting from the impact of environment. This view, which he held in common with many men of the Nineteenth Century, was set forth clearly in a passage of his one novel, *Vassall Morton*.

Take a savage from his woods or his prairies, and, school him as you will, the ingrained savage will still declare itself. Take the most polished of mankind, turn him into the wilderness, and forthwith the dormant savage begins to appear. Hunt him with enemies, gnaw him with hunger, beat him with wind and rain, and observe the result; how the delicate tissues of civilization are blown away, how rude passions start into life, how his bodily cravings grow clamorous and importunate, how he grows reckless of his own blood and the blood of others.<sup>3</sup>

Thus Francis Parkman vividly asserted his belief that all men have the same basic nature in which the character of the savage is present in all men in some degree. To him the true difference between the savage who had been educated and the man of civilized culture was no more than an equation of the distance each had traveled from actual savagery. Because he was more recently removed from the primitive stage, the educated savage would revert to man's fundamental nature more readily than a cultured person in whom the "war-like instinct" was neither extinguished nor repressed, but simply refined and civilized.<sup>4</sup>

This view of the effect of culture on man pointedly demonstrated Parkman's belief that environment was a more important force than heredity in establishing the character which emerged

<sup>2</sup> Complete bibliographies of the non-historical works of Parkman (upon which this article is based) will be found in Wilbur L. Schramm, (ed.), *Francis Parkman, Representative Selections*, New York, 1938; and in Mason Wade, *Francis Parkman: Heroic Historian*, New York, 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Vassall Morton*, Boston, 1856, 244. All works cited are by Parkman unless otherwise noted.

<sup>4</sup> "The Weak Side of Our Armies," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, June 30, 1863.

from man's basic nature. He emphasized his environmentalist position still further in a review of a book on the Indian tribes of the Pacific Coast. Parkman declared himself at loss to understand the degraded character of the tribes of Central California in view of the great abundance of their environment.<sup>5</sup> Had he believed in the greater importance of heredity, he would have encountered no difficulty.

It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that Parkman described the fighting qualities of the soldiers of the Civil War in terms of the sections of the nation from which they came. Southerners were naturally militant because their society encouraged warlike qualities in its men. The martial spirit was more abundant in men from the Northwest than in those from the Northeast because of the less advanced and more imperfect culture of the former region.<sup>6</sup>

Environment determined even the calibre of political leadership. Admitting that it was hard to find the source of the "conditions of human greatness," Parkman nevertheless remained convinced that greatness would never emerge where it was not wanted. A nation which asserted its belief in the idea of democratic equality by choosing men of indifferent character for office could never produce great leaders.<sup>7</sup>

A distinctly American character was also the result of a unique environment. Exploitation of the continent had made Americans a *parvenue* nation with all attendant "faults and follies." Rising too rapidly, Americans lacked modesty and dignity. Their preoccupation with material gain cramped the growth of a higher form of individual and national character. Although often feeling deeply about the issues which concern a democratic state, Parkman contended that Americans generally displayed little patience with demands for their sustained attention to anything but their daily business. The result was that politics in the United States were characterized by an apathetic good nature.<sup>8</sup>

"Rising in the world" was an American national disease natural to a people who were unhappy unless in pursuit of something. The

<sup>5</sup> Review of Bancroft's *Native Races of the Pacific States* in the *North American Review*, CXX (January, 1875), 41.

<sup>6</sup> "The Weak Side of Our Armies."

<sup>7</sup> "The Failure of Universal Suffrage," *North American Review*, CXXVII (July-August, 1878), 15.

<sup>8</sup> "Our Nation's Ordeal," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, September 4, 1861; "The Tale of the Ripe Scholar," *Nation*, IX (December 23, 1869), 560; "The Failure of Universal Suffrage," 11.

Civil War proved that the war spirit still existed among the people but it was being steadily undermined by pre-occupation with trade. Parkman protested that commercial honor was being confused with true honor. He was convinced that Americans were growing more proud of a good bargain than of manhood while things vital to the true worth and nobility of man were coming to be regarded as mere sham.<sup>9</sup>

Parkman held the domination of material interests also responsible for the lag in American scholarship. Except where they bore directly upon material considerations, the arts and sciences were regarded as agreeable but non-essential decorations. A lack of "high interest or ruling idea" gave the United States a widespread but superficial culture which expressed itself in a popular literature often frivolous and corrupt. Only in the writing of history had Americans demonstrated scholarship and literary skill—a fact which Parkman found curious in a people given so completely to living in the present and the future.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the importance which Parkman attached to the environment in establishing the character of man, there were inequalities among men which he asserted were hereditary. A society of complete equality of opportunity would promptly show a great diversity of individual reactions to similar environmental stimuli. Inherent diversities were, however, distinctions of degree rather than of type. The idea of inherent differences among men did not, therefore, contradict Parkman's belief that all men had a fundamental, war-like and savage nature modified only by the environment. All human nature was composed of the same essential elements but these were mixed by heredity in such different proportions and subjected to such different controlling factors in the environment that the result was contrasts among men which were as significant as similarities.<sup>11</sup>

The idea that man's character developed from a basic human nature through its contact with the environment was a distinct characteristic of the thought of the Age of Reason. John Locke contributed to the Enlightenment, among other things, a new view of human nature which held that man was not born damned but rather with a set of innate capacities which could be developed

<sup>9</sup> Vassall Morton, 32, 36-37; "The Weak Side of Our Armies."

<sup>10</sup> "The Tale of the Ripe Scholar," 559; "Our Nation's Ordeal"; Review of Read's *Historical Inquiry Concerning Henry Hudson*, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, XIX (June, 1867), 764.

<sup>11</sup> Vassall Morton, 372; "The Failure of Universal Suffrage," 6.

through sensory experience. Thus, as would be true of men in any period who regarded the environment as significant in man's development, the men of the Enlightenment placed great faith in the power of education to improve human society.<sup>12</sup>

Certainly Parkman had such a faith. Thus he could comment that "If one cannot learn to be enthusiastic in regard to the actualities of human nature, he can console himself by a boundless faith in its possibilities." He also insisted that, if the average man was allowed to believe there was no one better than himself, he would never rise above his own level. But Parkman's conviction that education could improve the character of man did not mean he thought that basic human nature could be changed. Rather there was a better side in man's nature which was sound and rational. Education could alter the balance of the characteristics of human nature to emphasize the most desirable without changing the basic nature of man.<sup>13</sup>

While Parkman included organized processes and institutions in his definition of education, he insisted that education had a more comprehensive meaning which involved all influences rising from "proper" surroundings. Too many people associated education with "school houses, school masters, lyceums, public libraries, colleges and diplomas." Vital education came from the "currents of life itself." All of man's experiences were a part of Parkman's idea of the educational process. He was explicit in the assertion that suffering and conflict would temper the mind, light the way to truth and strengthen the spirit. Even physical courage might be developed through mental habits.<sup>14</sup>

Francis Parkman did acknowledge the importance of formal education but he took a dim view of most institutionalized processes as he then knew them. Because the best minds of his time traditionally went into the ministry, secular scholarship was at a low level while the arts and sciences were left largely to those who could do nothing else. The result was that, when cultural nationalism began to demand original scholarship, the "mountain" of American

<sup>12</sup> Curti, "The Age of Reason and Morality, 1750-1860," 358-359.

<sup>13</sup> Vassall Morton, 86; "The Failure of Universal Suffrage," 12-13, 16; "Our Best Classes and the National Politics," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, July 21, 1863.

<sup>14</sup> "Why Our Army is not the Best in the World," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, October 14, 1862; "Aristocrats and Democrats," *Ibid.*, July 14, 1863; Vassall Morton, 209, 236.

educational institutions was "convulsed to deliver a mouse" of feeble academic effort.<sup>15</sup>

Parkman even joined the anti-intellectual critics of formal education in his assertion that the older brand of scholarship failed to meet the demands of the feverish activity of that day. The self-made man, his wealth and accomplishments, filled the public eye. The education offered by American colleges and the status of scholarship then current seemed to justify amply the deprecation of learning by the anti-intellectuals. Parkman never tired of insisting that the colleges must get into the main stream of life. On one occasion he went so far as to remark that if scholars had more contact with the American wilderness "it would be well for their bodies and their immortal souls."<sup>16</sup>

With this remark Parkman appears to be anticipating, not the romantic flight from reason, but the James-Dewey concept of the mind as the "capacity of the organism" in which the organism could adapt itself to changing situations through "problem solving." The nature of Parkman's belief in the potentialities of man is reflected in his concepts of the desirable aims of education. He insisted that education must not seek to cram a miscellany of facts into the mind. Education should attempt the development of the mind's powers of observation, of comparison and analysis, and of reasoning. Education should further strengthen and instruct the moral sense of man, leading him to knowledge of himself and so to personal modesty. A large body of persons thus educated would form a powerful bulwark against the demagogues that infested the democracy.<sup>17</sup>

Inasmuch as Parkman's ideas of education reflected his belief in man's capacity for growth and development, it is not surprising that Darwinian ideas of evolution also appear in Parkman's thought at many points. For the individual, he insisted, conflict and adversity were essential for the development of true manhood. Adversity was necessary for the operation of natural selection, without which man would degenerate. Continuous good fortune, he insisted, would weaken and pervert any person. Conflicts of mind and spirit were as desirable as physical struggle, yet in discussing the elements which temper the nature of man, Parkman expressed

<sup>15</sup> "The Tale of the Ripe Scholar," 558-559.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 559; "Exploring the Magalloway," *Harper's Magazine*, XXIX (November, 1864), 736.

<sup>17</sup> Curti, "Retreat from Reason in the Age of Science," 497; "The Tale of the Ripe Scholar," 560.

himself entirely in terms of physical combat and stated explicitly that physical action was essential to the attainment of high manly character.<sup>18</sup>

It followed naturally, therefore, that Parkman regarded the Civil War as a great regenerating influence upon an American manhood which he believed had sunk to a low ebb during the preceding decade. The desirability of physical conflict was further suggested in his observation that "a lofty purpose may turn timidity into heroism." The virtue of physical struggle was also reflected in the very structure of Parkman's novel, *Vassall Morton*. The villainous Vinal is depicted as having a relatively weak bodily constitution while Morton, so obviously heroic, is physically strong and delights in muscular exertion.<sup>19</sup>

Parkman's emphasis on physical conflict was doubtless a reflection of his own long and painful illness which meant so much confinement for this lover of the out-of-doors. His struggle between a desire to die and an urge to live appeared to convince him that there was a close inter-relation of body and spirit. Vassall Morton's fictional imprisonment seems to have symbolized Parkman's own confinement, and the struggles of the two men, one real and the other imagined, were really the same. Parkman's belief in the interaction of mind and body is suggested, then, in Morton's contemplated suicide which he rejected by an instinctive and higher appeal to his "better nature." Certainly this attitude was characteristic of the rationalist psychology of the early Nineteenth Century which also presupposed a duality of mind and body. Base impulses arose from the body but, with proper training of the mind, the use of reason and the will could correct and improve both the individual and society as a whole.<sup>20</sup>

According to Parkman, the ability of every man was subject to a "universal law of growth and achievement." Thus the man who knew himself and who set goals which he pursued would be a success. The man who ignored his own nature was doomed to failure. But while he saw that men have limitations, Parkman insisted that "men make more limits for themselves than nature

<sup>18</sup> "Our Nation's Ordeal," "The Woman Question," *North American Review*, CXXIX (October, 1879), 304; *Vassall Morton*, 208.

<sup>19</sup> "Conservatism," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, October 17, 1862; *Vassall Morton*, 143, 185.

<sup>20</sup> *Vassall Morton*, 200; Curti, "Retreat From Reason in the Age of Science," 492. For an account of Parkman's illness, see his autobiographical letter written to Dr. George Ellis in 1868 and reprinted in Schramm, *Francis Parkman*, 3-14.

makes for them." Obviously man might, through education which provided self-knowledge, greatly extend his limits.<sup>21</sup>

While Parkman found a sound and rational "better half" in people, it was evident to him that this side of man's nature was too often obscured in the continuing battle of principles which was ever waged within each being. It was precisely man's failures in this battle which led so many people into an undignified scramble for the material spoils of politics.<sup>22</sup>

This scramble for gain led Parkman to conclude that human nature had not changed much since man first appeared on earth. It has been noted that, although he was an environmentalist, Parkman did not claim that exterior conditions could alter the essential nature of man. Changes in environment might shift the emphasis in man's character, but they could not make man into something entirely new. Man ever acted in his own interest, but interests differed among men. Material gain attracted only a part of the population. The "better sort" of men remained aloof from politics because the rewards they sought were not found there and they found the scramble itself repulsive. Parkman picked no quarrel with man's inclination to act in self-interest. He did believe, however, that education would show men that their own interests were identical with those of the community.<sup>23</sup>

Parkman was also explicit in expressing his views of the differences between the nature of men and the nature of women. He drew an analogy between the two sexes and the two electrical properties of the magnet. In both instances, he declared, each element required its opposite in order to function and thus was drawn to the other. The degree to which a man or a woman was emphatically masculine or feminine determined the strength of the individual's need for the other sex. This need, felt by both men and women, was intellectual as well as physical. The force of this common demand could bring about a wide area of understanding between sexes but, however well-developed such understanding might become, there would always be some aspects of the nature of one sex which members of the other could never fully comprehend.

<sup>21</sup> "The Woman Question," 309-310; *Vassall Morton*, 216-217.

<sup>22</sup> "The Failure of Universal Suffrage," 12-13; *Vassall Morton*, 216-217; "Our Best Classes and the National Politics."

<sup>23</sup> "Our Best Classes and the National Politics"; "The Failure of Universal Suffrage," 8-9.

Despite some definite advantages which the United States offered to women, Parkman found there were also shortcomings in the American environment. These handicaps were in the nature of

An overstrained and morbid activity, an incessant tension of nerves, bred partly by climate, but incomparably more by the peculiar social conditions of the country where all kinds of competition, spurred by all kinds of stimulus, keep mind and body always on the stretch.<sup>24</sup>

Thus the conflict and adversity which Parkman found so essential for the development of men was actually harmful to women. The masculine preoccupation with material and practical pursuits and the male concern with ambitions and rivalries made men much more ignorant of the beauties of life than women. It was, therefore, the role of women, with their more delicate sensibilities and greater passivity of temperament, to set the moral standards of society and provide moral leadership. Parkman found proof that this was the peculiar duty of women in the admittedly unjust double standards of censure for moral lapses, since the more severe condemnation was always reserved for the female transgressor.

Parkman was sure that at least half the weakness of woman sprang from the "sensitiveness of her bodily organization." Physically, the differences between men and women were "ordained by God and Nature" and man, who did not make these differences, could not unmake them. Women were more delicate than men, both physically and mentally and, in women, the relations between body and mind were more intimate and subtle.

But if the relationships between woman's inherent physical nature and her mind had an intimacy peculiar to her sex it is a bit surprising to find Parkman denying that female mental qualities were inherited. If he was aware of the apparent contradiction in these two points, he gave no indication of it.

A possible explanation is suggested in Parkman's declaration that he believed men and women stood at about the same level of intellectual ability but that their ideas were inevitably expressed in different ways. This suggests that, while differences between men and women were inherent, within the frame of these differences development of both sexes remained largely a matter of environment. Thus a woman might develop intellectually as much as a man, but her growth would assume a somewhat different character

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<sup>24</sup> "The Woman Question," 311.

because of the closer association of the woman's mind with her inherited bodily condition.

A distinction existed in Parkman's mind between man's "resolution and the "will" of woman. The former, he held, was subject to reason while the latter was not. Feminine nature had an "impetuous" quality which caused Parkman to declare that "It's not a woman's province to be reasonable."

The differences between men and women resulted, therefore, from the influences of both heredity and environment. The relation of women to men was varied by differences of race, mode of life, and degree of civilization. Parkman agreed that woman's position had improved and that further improvement might be expected. At the same time he insisted that, no matter how much liberty an advanced society might provide for its women, they must always exist under restrictions not imposed on the male. Women could not hope to live without these social laws. Unless there was a radical alteration in human nature—for which Parkman found not the slightest promise—women could not be emancipated equally with men. It was not, he insisted, a matter of mere "custom, habit, or public opinion," but the existence of an "all-pervading force" found in the men of all societies, in all times, which would insist upon this distinction for women.<sup>25</sup>

The implication of this reasoning was, of course, that the special nature of women was due more to the special nature of men than to any other factor. Parkman thus stood squarely on one of the major inconsistencies of the thinking of the men of the Enlightenment. Certainly the idea of the inferior status of women was out of tune with the general view of human nature in the Age of Reason. This held that all mankind had capacities which, given proper training, could realize better individuals and a better world of reason. Jefferson was drawn into the inconsistency on the status of women but Franklin was not. Although Franklin was certainly a man of the Enlightenment, in that climate of opinion his feminism was a minority view which was forced to wait for the impetus of the Transcendentalist element of the Romantic movement.

Parkman stood somewhere between Jefferson and Franklin. Observing that universal suffrage could function only with a high level of material prosperity and with the lengthy development of a tradi-

<sup>25</sup> For this section on the nature of women, the entire article, "The Woman Question," is pertinent. Significant passages are also found in *Vassall Morton*, 44, 84-85.

tion of self-government, he conceded that women could learn politics. But he argued, women should not be granted the vote because only men had received adequate training. The process of preparing women would require generations. Even with the training that men had received, there were still far too many unqualified voters without adding to their number.<sup>26</sup>

The entire span of Parkman's life was encompassed in a period in which a frank discussion of sex was taboo. Yet in *Vassall Morton*, published in 1856, he managed to describe some of his concepts of the sexual drive. Morton felt the awakening of such a desire in the form of a sharpening of all his senses to the extent that it seemed almost a malady—a malady which the author declared "will sometimes visit those of the ruder sex whom it attacks with virulence." Parkman was also aware of the problem of what would now be called sublimation, for he related that, within Morton, his chivalrous instincts struggled with the "urgency of a vigorous blood." The same good qualities which caused Morton to fight his physical desires also taught him to let his energy escape in constant bodily exercise rather "than in any less commendable recreations."<sup>27</sup>

Later in life Parkman abandoned even these thinly veiled circumlocutions for direct statement. He listed, as some of the major drives in men, the forces of hunger, thirst, self-preservation, avarice, malice and envy. Aside from the added force of religion, however, he contended that most of the nobler desires and energies drew their impulse from the impact of sex. The sex urge, Parkman insisted, was due to basic intellectual differences between men and women as much as it was due to physical attraction. In a very modern vein he noted that, while there was much variation as to the degree of power which the sex drive had in individuals, the whole human race was subject to it and to its ramifications. Other forces might supersede it in certain individuals at specific times, but none of the other drives exhibited the character of universality which could be claimed for sex. No other desire or motivating element was so prolific of results—both for evil and for good.<sup>28</sup>

Parkman's views of human nature were also revealed in his concept of class. He insisted that all ideas of human equality were fallacious and that all societies constructed upon such ideas were

<sup>26</sup> Curti, "The Age of Reason and Morality," 370-373; "The Failure of Universal Suffrage," 8; "The Woman Question," 318.

<sup>27</sup> *Vassall Morton*, 134.

<sup>28</sup> "The Woman Question," 305-306.

unstable. For him, the "best class" was the "cultivated class" on which wealth had no direct bearing. He admitted that many of the so-called "Brahmin caste" were in the "best class," but it is significant that he did not include all of them. At another point Parkman described the "best class" as those "who by education and association have gained a more liberal development than falls to the general share." This rather consistent tendency to regard the "best class" as the product of the educational environment rather than of wealth or heredity—although he doubtless would have pointed out limitations of native ability—was a fairly early conclusion in his thinking.<sup>29</sup>

Being himself a member of the "Brahmin caste," and also well-educated both by the formal process and through extensive travel, it is evident that Parkman's concept of the "better classes" painted a picture of the situation in which he found himself. There is a very strong odor of class snobbishness in his earlier work. Later in life his self-image of social superiority faded a bit but never entirely disappeared. His picture of the "better class," therefore, never really changed.<sup>30</sup>

Parkman believed that there were two kinds of inequality, one of which was fictitious and the other real and natural. Fictitious inequalities included such things as rank, title, privilege, and wealth while natural inequalities existed in the factors of character, ability and culture. Those who had superior endowments of the second group of qualities formed the "best class." This concept of "real" inequality is also seen in Parkman's view that the record of man's progress was the history of the leading minds among men. Without these minds, even material progress would have been imperfect. A single great mind might develop ideas which millions of poorer minds, however aggregated, could never conceive.<sup>31</sup>

Although Parkman was quite obviously devoted to the "great man" concept of history,<sup>32</sup> there is no reason to ascribe this to the influence of Carlyle. It should be kept in mind that men as diverse in frame of reference as Jefferson and Hamilton both expected that, in the natural order of things, leadership in society would fall to an aristocracy of talent and ability. Such a view is common, in all

<sup>29</sup> "Our Best Classes and the National Politics"; "The Weak Side of Our Armies"; *Vassall Morton*, 372.

<sup>30</sup> For the most recent scholarship on Parkman and his social environment see the sympathetically critical Wade, *Francis Parkman*.

<sup>31</sup> "The Failure of Universal Suffrage," 4-5.

<sup>32</sup> Wade, *Francis Parkman*, 448-452.

ages and places, to those who are convinced that they possess the requisite talent and ability.

Parkman's definition of the "better class" could, however, be colored by his other prejudices. A case in point was his different attitudes towards the Indians and the Acadians, the latter being the French settlers forcibly removed by the British from Nova Scotia in 1775. In writing of the American Indians, Parkman noted with considerable approval that most of them showed conspicuous respect for native superiority as well as a willingness to be subject to it. Yet in discussing the influence of the learned Jesuit priests—of whom he strongly disapproved—over the Acadians after the French and Indian War, Parkman was severely critical. He declared that the largely illiterate Acadians had become enfeebled by mental subjection to their priests. This had been true for so long that these people could no longer think for themselves. The result was that the Acadian needed their priests not only for their spiritual problems, but to guide them in their daily lives. Parkman's different views of the "best" leadership in these two societies was prompted by a marked anti-Catholic bias. This is borne out in his frank statement that having experienced both, he much preferred the society of the Sioux tepee to that of an Italian monastery.<sup>33</sup>

In commenting upon the differences in the nature of peoples, Parkman had little to say on the subject of "race" as a designation of classes of people distinguished according to defined physical types. He often used the word "race" to mean a cultural or national group, but more frequently he applied it in the species sense to refer to the "human race." He did, however, make extensive comments on one ethnic group that would fall within the modern anthropologist's understanding of a distinct race. These were the American Indians.

Speaking of the Iroquois, but indicating that his ideas had more general application, Parkman claimed that the Indian was less sensitive to pain than the white man but that this also made the Indian less given to passion than the "higher races" of men. This was, he asserted, a matter of training. The fact that these fierce and warlike people lived peaceably in villages without the coercion of superiors he explained in terms of developed character and habit.

<sup>33</sup> "Manners and Customs of Primitive Indian Tribes," *North American Review*, CI (July, 1865), 51; "The Acadian Tragedy," *Harper's Magazine*, LXIX (November, 1884), 878; *The Journals of Francis Parkman*, New York, 1947, 1:101, quoted by editor Mason Wade in an editorial note from an unidentified letter.

Parkman believed that the Iroquois had evolved more intense spirit of nationality than any other people since the Spartans and he observed that, contrary to popular notions, Indians in general were a gregarious people.<sup>34</sup>

Parkman asserted that the Great Indian orator, Red Jacket, was in many ways, characteristic of his race. He noted that Red Jacket was in no sense a broad intellect, but was remarkably shrewd and subtle, possessing an amazing power of sarcasm. But this Indian leader insisted that he could find no advantage for his people either in civilization or in Christianity. He persisted, instead, in a "curious Indian idea" that one divine government existed for his own people and another for the white race. Far from concluding that the Indian's limited vision was inherent, Parkman declared that it was due to the fact that the contact of the Indians with whites was limited either to missionaries of narrow vision or to other whites of the lowest character. The implication is clear that Parkman believed that if he were given the right environmental opportunities, the Indian could learn and advance his estate as well as anyone.<sup>35</sup>

Shortly after the close of the last Indian wars in the United States, Parkman stated his views on the sources of Indian character in most emphatic terms. Insisting that the Indian was worth saving, he declared that the nation had an obligation to help him adjust to a new life. The Indian would not understand sentimentality, he warned, but he would understand justice and honor. Then, to counteract the objections of those who still nourished the frontier hatred of the Red Man, he examined the character of the Indian in purest Darwinian terms. Refusing to be drawn into any futile effort at comparing white and Indian morality, he noted that, with the Indians,

The law of the survival of the fittest bore upon them with peculiar harshness; and the fittest were with them the boldest, the hardiest, the most crafty and the fiercest. It is by the working of this pitiless law through countless generations that the distinctive qualities of the Indian have been formed and wrought out of him in one generation or two.<sup>36</sup>

Here it is evident that Parkman believed natural selection through the law of the "survival of the fittest" was operative on man. The

<sup>34</sup> "Manners and Customs of Primitive Indian Tribes," 40, 50-52, 59.

<sup>35</sup> Review of Stone's *Life and Times of Red Jacket*, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, XIX (March, 1867), 384-385.

<sup>36</sup> "Letter on the Indian Rights Association," *Critic*, VIII (May, 1886), 248.

pressure of the environment acted to depress the weak still further while the traits of those best suited to survival in the Indian's environment were transmitted to their offspring. The process of natural selection could be altered—but only over a great period of time by a gradual alteration of the environment.

Parkman's major biographer, Mason Wade, has quite properly made much of the Romantic influence in Parkman's work. At the same time, however, through all of Parkman's thought on the nature of man, a single theme consistently predominated. This was, of course, the tremendous emphasis which he placed on the role of the environment in molding human nature. With all men born savages, and with all men possessed of the same components in their nature, inherent differences existed among men in the form of varying endowments of the multiple elements of human nature. But even the influence of these components could be altered by environmental conditions which Parkman declared would shift the emphasis from one facet of an individual's nature to another. As an environmentalist, Parkman actually moved into one of the major streams of thought traditional to the Age of Reason.

It has been said of the great Roman historian, Tacitus, that he could not have attacked the degeneration of Nero's Rome had it not been for the fact that high standards of personal and public virtue remained the Roman ideal. In similar sense, Parkman's strictures against American life in his own time were born of his conviction that, within admitted limitations, man had an almost infinite capacity for improvement.

Parkman often wrote in anger and sometimes he wrote in disgust; but he never wrote without hope. Because he had overcome so many obstacles himself, he believed that others could do the same. He specifically declared his faith in the high potential of mankind. His concern for education, to be improved along broadly defined lines, only underscored his basic faith in the improvability of man. Parkman criticized the democracy in which he lived, then, because he believed its people had not attained the standards which he was certain their basic nature placed within their reach. The fact that he should set those standards so high made Parkman's view of human nature a true compliment to his fellow men.

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## The Committee of Mexican Bondholders and European Intervention in 1861

The origin of British investments in Mexico dates from a letter of March 26, 1822, of Francisco de Borja Migoni, a Mexican merchant residing in London, to General Agustín Iturbide. Migoni, having heard of the financial problems facing his native land, wrote to Iturbide offering his services to assist the destitute national treasury by attempting to raise a loan in England.<sup>1</sup> That Mexico was in need of a loan at this period of her history is evident from the fiscal records of 1819. In that year, the ninth of the revolution against Spain, the total revenues of Mexico were \$9,646,657, and the total expenditures amounted to \$10,212,373. In order to cover this deficit of \$565,716, the Mexican government inaugurated "forced loans" in the amount of \$12,500,000 from the Catholic Church and private individuals.<sup>2</sup>

Forced loans, however, were not sufficient to meet the expenses of the debt-ridden administration. Therefore, the Mexican Congress on June 25, 1822, approved Migoni's suggestion by authorizing the government to

"... seek among foreign powers a loan of twenty-five to thirty million pesos in such manner and under such conditions as its well known zeal may consider least onerous to the nation."<sup>3</sup>

Actually, the amount desired as a loan was not extravagant because by April, 1823, the national debt of Mexico had reached the staggering figure of \$45,000,000.<sup>4</sup> One cause of the early financial chaos of the young nation was the fact that, since Spanish forces had remained in control of San Juan de Ulloa off Vera Cruz for four years after the mainland had won freedom, the Mexican customs officials could not collect import duties, the most important item in the national revenue.<sup>5</sup> Walter F. McCaleb suggests that the principal cause of the financial difficulties was the inexperience of government officials, long accustomed to viceregal administration

<sup>1</sup> Edgar Turlington, *Mexico and Her Foreign Creditors*, New York, 1930, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Flavins McCaleb, *The Public Finances of Mexico*, New York, 1921, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Turlington, *Mexico*, 22.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>5</sup> Hubert Herring, *A History of Latin America: From the Beginnings to the Present*, New York, 1956, 305, note 1.

of financial affairs. Thus, after 1821, these officials were unable to solve the complex financial problems which accompanied their country's newly found freedom. Mexico, in the words of McCaleb, was "like a child suddenly possessed of a gigantic toy, with its puzzling mechanism."<sup>6</sup>

Whatever the cause, the fact remained that the country was faced with an astronomical debt. The nation had then turned to Migoni hoping that through his intercession a foreign government would come to the rescue. On May 14, 1824, the Mexican Government approved a contract made by Señor Migoni with B. A. Goldschmidt and Company, Bankers of London, for a loan of £3,200,000 at five per cent.<sup>7</sup> By this contract Goldschmidt and Company agreed to place at the disposal of the Mexican Government, within fifteen months, the sum of £1,600,000. In return for this money, the Mexican Government issued bonds for £3,200,000 redeemable within thirty years from October 1, 1823, and bearing interest at the rate of five per cent per annum. For the payment of interest and the maintenance of the redemption fund of £32,000 a year, the Mexican Government gave a general pledge of its entire revenues and a special pledge of one-third of all duties collected at Vera Cruz after April 1, 1825.<sup>8</sup> It was this Migoni-Goldschmidt transaction which later served as the foundation for the claims of the Committee of Mexican Bondholders which are so well expressed in *The Times* (London), 1861.

Goldschmidt sold the bonds to the public at fifty-eight per cent of their face value, leaving a gross profit of a million pounds with an expected yield to investors of 8.26 per cent.<sup>9</sup> For the next thirty years, this group of speculators was continually appealing to the British Foreign Office to secure for them the revenues to which they were entitled by contract and of which they were deprived by the anarchical Mexican Government. Shortly after their original investment these investors formed a Committee of Mexican Bondholders at London in 1829 to protect their foreign interests.<sup>10</sup> The formation of this committee is in itself an indication of the lack of confidence that the investors had in the Mexican Government. The fact that the date of the Committee's organization coincided with

<sup>6</sup> McCaleb, *Public Finances of Mexico*, 24.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas R. Lill, *National Debt of Mexico: History and Present Status*, New York, 1919, 12.

<sup>8</sup> Turlington, *Mexico*, 35, 36.

<sup>9</sup> Corporation of Foreign Bondholders, *Sixty-Fourth Annual Report*, London, 1937, 344.

<sup>10</sup> Turlington, *Mexico*, 11.

that of the revolution of General Anastasio Bustamante against President Vicente Guerrero may be regarded as an explanation for the investors' shortlived trust in the government of Mexico. The earlier ouster of Iturbide and the subsequent overthrow of Guerrero convinced the Bondholders of the impossibility of the Mexican Government's position.

The floundering efforts of the new republic to develop a stable government following independence are summarized by Professor Herring in the following manner:

The public treasury was drained by greedy rulers and costly wars, while successive administrations were forced to conclude disadvantageous bargains with foreign bankers. . . . In this period Mexican political life was fixed with the curse of *Personalismo*, a doctrine which discards constitutions, political parties, and ideals, and exalts the anarchic rule of the demagogue.<sup>11</sup>

Besides the Bondholders there were other citizens who in the early 1820's had begun risking their capital in Mexico by organizing and investing in seven mining associations.<sup>12</sup> Paradoxical as it may seem, the British-controlled mining companies were extremely prosperous throughout the forty years of Mexican anarchy. By 1861 stock in the United Mexican Mining Company was the most sought-after investment on the London Stock Exchange.<sup>13</sup> Clearly, in spite of the existing anarchy, the British investors were shrewd enough to realize that a profit could still be realized in the potentially wealthy young nation. The Bondholders also must have sensed that their investment was not so insecure as it superficially appeared. Ample proof of this is found in an examination of the annual publication of the trade and navigation statistics of the port of Vera Cruz for the three years, 1856-1858:

#### IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF THE PORT OF VERA CRUZ<sup>14</sup>

Official statement for the three years, 1856-58

Total	1856	1857	1858
Imports	\$17,720,582	\$11,224,415	\$10,033,569
Exports	8,942,988	11,384,765	2,915,576
Import duties	4,757,397	2,155,386	1,517,930
Export duties	243,035	375,382	100,617

<sup>11</sup> Herring, *History of Latin America*, 306.

<sup>12</sup> J. Fred Rippy, "English Investments in Mexico: A Study of Bonanzas and Heartbreaks," *The Journal of Business of the University of Chicago*, XXV (October, 1952), 242.

<sup>13</sup> *The Times*, London, January 2, 1861, p. 7, col. 4.

<sup>14</sup> "The Trade and Prospects of Mexico," *The Bankers' Magazine: Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, XXI (1861), 77.

In order to understand the significance of the imports and exports at Vera Cruz for the period 1856-58 and the relationships of the duties collected during that period to the Bondholders, it is necessary to review quickly the provisions of a law passed by the Mexican Congress on October 14, 1850. This law, which effected the seventh alteration and second conversion of the original debt contract, provided that the Bondholders would henceforth receive twenty-five per cent of the import duties and five per cent of the export duties in the Gulf ports.<sup>15</sup> By the law of 1850, then, the Bondholders, according to the official statement for the years 1856-58, should have received \$2,082,928 of the import duties and \$35,901 of the export duties, a three-year grand total of \$2,118,829. But, with the beginning of the revolution of Ayutla in March, 1854, the foreign debt became abeyant.

The import and export statistics of the port of Vera Cruz show that theoretically the state was in a position to pay the Bondholders the money due them by virtue of the law of October, 1850. The revolution of Ayutla, however, precluded any possibility of satisfying the Committee of Mexican Bondholders. The Vera Cruz illustration further furnishes convincing proof that the anarchic rule of Mexico was the fundamental cause of the Mexican Government's inability to meet its financial obligations. The port of Vera Cruz was in no sense an exception but rather an example of the general policy followed throughout Mexico at this time.

One of the first acts of the new government under President Ignacio Comonfort, one of the leaders in the Ayutla revolution, was to issue a decree authorizing the Bondholders to name agents in each of the ports of the Republic, with authority to collect the amounts due direct from the importers and exporters.<sup>16</sup> Comonfort's attempt to placate the Bondholders was of little consequence, however, as his stay in power was of brief duration. Factions within the Constitutional Party, partly attributable to the insolvent condition of the national treasury and also to the growing division between the clerical and constitutional party, led to Comonfort's resignation and the beginning of the bloodiest war in Mexican history—the War of the Reform. Two political parties were involved in this war, one representing the Church and the army, the other composed of the group favoring the recently promulgated

<sup>15</sup> Lill, *National Debt of Mexico*, 36. For a detailed account of the seven alterations in the original Bond issue from 1824 to 1850 see Turlington, *Mexico*, 49-100.

<sup>16</sup> Lill, *National Debt of Mexico*, 39.

Constitution. The clerical or conservative forces had headquarters at Mexico City and were headed by General Felix Zuloaga and later by General Miguel Miramón. The Constitutional forces were presided over by Benito Juárez, who established his government at Vera Cruz. Because Juárez was at the customs city of Vera Cruz, it was to his party<sup>17</sup> that the first definite overtures were made in behalf of the Committee of Mexican Bondholders.

On January 24, 1859, Captain Hugh Dunlop of the British Navy in command of *H.M.S. Tarter* sent a letter to Governor Manuel G. Zamora of Vera Cruz. Dunlop wrote:

In order to remove the just indignation with which Her Majesty's Government has viewed the frequent infringement of the rights of British subjects in Mexico, and to bring this question of grievances to a prompt and satisfactory termination, the Undersigned submits for ratification the Articles herewith appended:—

To be charged on the whole customs revenue [at Vera Cruz]; twenty-five per cent for the Mexican Bondholders in London.

The immediate payment to Her Majesty's Consul at Vera Cruz of 7,680 dollars due to the London bondholders. . . .

That the authorities in possession of Vera Cruz insist upon the assignments to the British creditors being punctually and fully paid at Tampico to the agent for the debt; and in case of failure to do so, the claim to be made good from the Custom House at Vera Cruz at the expiration of one month's notice.<sup>18</sup>

On February 7, 1859, Zamora, who referred to himself as "the mouthpiece" of Juárez, wrote to Dunlop that:

The British creditors' assignments shall be paid punctually and in full, the Constitutional Government having taken measures to carry out this obligation with the most entire good faith.

Besides the payment of the . . . twenty-five per cent, belonging to holders of Mexican bonds in London, there shall now be set apart eight per cent of the Custom-house dues on foreign vessels (with the exception of French vessels, which are already very heavily taxed) for the payment of arrears of interest. . . .

The amount now due to the holders of Mexican bonds in London, and which was left unpaid in September last, shall be paid.

The Government of Vera Cruz will continue using every effort to en-

<sup>17</sup> The use of the word *party*, rather than *government*, is proper because at the inception of the Civil War, Zuloaga, and not Juárez, was recognized as the head of the *de facto* government; see Edgar L. Erickson (ed.), *British Sessional Papers: House of Commons, 1861, LXV*, 339, New York, (Readix Microprint, n. d.); hereinafter cited as *British Sessional Papers*.

<sup>18</sup> *British Sessional Papers*, 339, 340.

force the payment of the British assignments by the Customs-house at Tampico. . . .<sup>19</sup>

Though Governor Zamora, the spokesman for Juárez, had given his word of honor that British holders of Mexican bonds would be paid "punctually and in full," the Juárez Government failed to keep its promise. As a result of this latest infraction a new agreement was reached at Vera Cruz on December 15, 1860, between Captain W. Cornwallis Aldham, Dunlop's successor as commander of the British squadron in the Gulf of Mexico, and Melchor Ocampo, Foreign Minister in the Juárez Government. The new agreement contained the following provisions:

An additional ten per cent on all import duties, from all vessels, shall be assigned at the Customs houses of Vera Cruz and Tampico, to repay the sums withheld in both ports during the present year; and when these sums are paid up, the said new assignments of ten per cent, shall cease and return to the National Treasury.

The payment of the assignments shall commence on the first of January, 1861, excepting that of the new ten per cent, which shall not commence until the first [of] February, by which time the Sea Customhouse of this port shall furnish her Majesty's Consul with a complete and exact statement of the sums unpaid by it during the whole of the present year. . . .

The Government engages solemnly not to tolerate in [the] future the violation of the present or the Dunlop Convention, and to remove from office any officer or public employé appertaining to or dependent on it who shall again attempt to infringe the present arrangement of that of Captain Dunlop. . . .<sup>20</sup>

Three months prior to the Aldham-Ocampo agreement the Juárez forces, financially pressed in the last months of the war, had seized over a million pesos of foreign funds which were chiefly the property of citizens of Great Britain, France, Spain, and Germany. The consuls of those powers immediately reported the confiscation to their home Governments. George B. Matthew, the British chargé d'affaires, wrote to Lord John Russell, British Foreign Secretary, on September 28, 1860:

I regret to have to communicate to your Lordship . . . the seizure of the *conducta* of silver [at Laguna Seca] proceeding from Guanajuato and San Luis Potosí to Tampico for embarkation, in which various British subjects had money to the amount of between £80,000 and 100,000 sterling.<sup>21</sup>

As would be expected, this unscrupulous theft of the property of

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 343.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 345, 346.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 266.

British subjects caused fiery editorials to appear in British newspapers demanding an apology from the Juárez party.<sup>22</sup> Matthew wrote to General Santos Degollado, the general under whose authority the crime had been committed, urging him to consider the restitution of the \$400,000 of stolen money.<sup>23</sup>

In the event that Degollado should refuse to return the stolen funds, Matthew on December 9, 1860, wrote to Captain Aldham:

In this disagreeable and difficult position I see no alternative but in the forcible occupation of the Custom-houses of Vera Cruz and Tampico (and if necessary, of those places), should our just demands be rejected.<sup>24</sup>

It is the parenthetical phrase of Matthew's letter that is pregnant with significance. Here was the British chargé d'affaires suggesting to the commanding officer of a British naval squadron that Her Majesty's troops forcibly occupy the cities of Vera Cruz and Tampico. Admittedly, Matthew's letter was not an official statement of the British Foreign Office, but it does reveal the drastic steps a high-ranking governmental official was contemplating in order to protect the investments of Her Majesty's subjects.

Understandably, the Committee of Mexican Bondholders did not fail to give the Degollado seizure of the silver train at Laguna Seca their undivided attention. In the summer of 1861 the Committee presented a series of resolutions to Lord Russell demanding that he formulate a definite policy in order to resolve their claims of \$10,000,000 against Mexico. One of the resolutions dealt with the theft (by Degollado) of commercial house property from an official *conducta*.<sup>25</sup> President Juárez realized that his cause would be very seriously jeopardized if the British Foreign Office, which still had not recognized him, should turn against his party. He therefore ordered that the British money be returned and that Degollado stand trial on the charge of treason to the Constitutional Government.<sup>26</sup> That the Laguna Seca incident did not erupt into an international war may be attributed, at least in part, to this decisive action on the part of the chief executive of the liberal forces.

The Juárez forces were not alone in their seizure of British property. The Miramón Government aggravated the situation by an even more serious blunder: On November 17, 1860, Leonardo Már-

<sup>22</sup> *The Times*, February 19, 1861, p. 5, col. 4.

<sup>23</sup> *British Sessional Papers*, 300.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 309. This letter was a contributing factor in effecting the Aldham-Ocampo agreement, previously discussed.

<sup>25</sup> *The Times*, July 4, 1861, p. 10, cols. 1, 2; July 9, 1861, p. 11, col. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Ralph Roeder, *Juárez and His Mexico*, I, New York, 1947, 250-255.

quez, Miramón's leading general, wrote to Charles Whitehead, the Bondholders' agent in Mexico City, indicating the audacity of the Miramón-Márquez forces:

As the moneys belonging to the public funds which are in your custody, destined to the payment of the bondholders of the foreign debt contracted in London, are not yet derived in definite payment, and in the actual circumstances may run much risk...his Excellency, the General-in-chief of said forces, in compliance with his duty, and in order to save his responsibility in respect to the valuable property, has directed that you place the said sums at the disposal of the Commisariat of the army; with the understanding that only the accounts absolutely necessary shall be removed from the chests in which they may be found...This day you will please to deliver the sum of 200,000 dollars, for which the Commisary-General will give you a receipt. God and Law.<sup>27</sup>

When Whitehead refused to turn over the money,<sup>28</sup> Márquez replied that he was sending Colonel Don Antonio Juaregin to carry out Miramón's order.<sup>29</sup> And the orders were ruthlessly carried out. Juan B. Pacheco, Spanish Ambassador to the Miramón Government, was in the British Legation at the time of the robbery of the \$600,000 belonging to the British investors. In a letter to Matthew, Pacheco reported that the Miramón forces had broken through "a closed door, shut, and stamped with the seals of that [British] legation."<sup>30</sup>

An immediate result of the seizure of the Bondholders' money was the official severance by the British Foreign Office of all diplomatic relations with the Miramón Government.<sup>31</sup> After the seizure of the Bondholders' money at the British Legation there followed a barrage of letters to Lord Russell demanding that the British Government take action. On December 15, 1860, David Robertson, Member of Parliament and Honorary Chairman of the Committee of Mexican Bondholders, wrote to Russell describing the Bondholders as:

...a most respectable body, many of them whose fathers, husbands, and brothers embarked their all in the funds in 1825 to aid the Mexican Government and people to achieve their independence, to which the British Government of that day lent their open countenance and avowed support.<sup>32</sup>

As spokesman for the Committee of Mexican Bondholders, Robertson added:

<sup>27</sup> *British Sessional Papers*, 280, 281.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 287.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 274.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 296.

As a body of ill-used Englishmen we feel confident that we shall not seek in vain at your Lordship's hands for immediate redress. . . .<sup>33</sup>

On the 12th of January, 1861, Lord Russell assured Robertson and the Committee of Mexican Bondholders:

Her Majesty's Government will hold the Mexican nation, by whatever Government it may happen to be ruled, responsible for the money recently seized at Mexico.<sup>34</sup>

Russell's reply, written after the triumph of the Juárez forces, was temporarily effective in pacifying Robertson and the Committee. In the months following the robbery the Bondholders were by no means alone in their loud protests against the Miramón pillage. Robert Phillimore, the foremost jurist in England, remarked that the act of seizing public funds under the seal of the Legation assumed the public character of an offense against the Queen of England.<sup>35</sup>

Echoes of the Miramón seizure even reached the British House of Commons. On February 12, 1861, one week after the reconvening of Parliament, Henry Bristow, M.P., asked Lord Russell what measures his office had taken or were going to take to protect British interests in Mexico. Russell replied that after the recent shameful robbery committed by General Miramón, Her Majesty's Government had informed Matthew to contact Juárez, and "to intimate that we would recognize his Government if he would acknowledge responsibility for our financial losses."<sup>36</sup>

The public excitement over Miramón's embezzlement of Bondholders' funds and the general financial chaos in Mexico in the momentous year of 1861 is clearly seen in the columns of *The Times*, which in the 1860's was the world's most influential newspaper. And inasmuch as Lord Russell was not regarded with favor by John Thadeus Delane,<sup>37</sup> editor of *The Times*, 1841-1877, the newspaper did not hesitate to ally itself with the Bondholders against the Foreign Secretary. Russell was attacked by the editor of *The Times* as a man who

... has shown by his past course that British property may with perfect impunity be seized and misappropriated in that country [Mexico] the

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 297.

<sup>34</sup> *The Times*, May 30, 1861, p. 7, cols. 1, 2.

<sup>35</sup> Joaquín D. Casasus, *Historia de la deuda contraída en Londres, Mexico*, Imprenta del Gobierno, 1885, 340.

<sup>36</sup> T. C. Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, CLXI, London, 1861, 340, 341.

<sup>37</sup> William Dodgson Bowman, *The Story of the Times*, London, 1931, 235.

bondholders are evidently at the mercy of the Government, and in a position no better than if they had never given up three-fourths of their claims in order to obtain the concession of the customs' duties as a fancied security for the remainder.<sup>38</sup>

A week later, Lord Russell again found himself censured—this time in the House of Lords by William Graham. The subject was the recently reported<sup>39</sup> escape of Miramón with the connivance of the French Minister in Mexico. Graham directed Lord Russell to ask the French Government to explain their assisting General Miramón, the embezzler of the Bondholders' money.<sup>40</sup>

In the meantime, the British chargé d'affaires had presented Lord Russell's condition of recognition of Francisco Zarco, Juárez's Secretary of State. The conditions were that all the just claims of the British subjects be acknowledged by the Juárez régime. On February 23, 1861, Zarco notified Matthew that the conditions were accepted, whereupon recognition was accorded.<sup>41</sup> It is difficult to understand just how Juárez proposed to fulfill his acceptance of the British claim. Mexico was an effete nation, exhausted by its recent civil war. Furthermore, almost all the major revenues of the country were assigned to foreign creditors. The total assignments for the ports of Vera Cruz and Tampico in January, 1861, were at the preposterous figure of ninety-two per cent.<sup>42</sup> Juárez was in a dilemma. He was faced with the mutually exclusive problems of satisfying the uncompromising claims of the foreign bondholders and establishing an adequate budget for the operation of his government.

By the end of April a decision was reached. Señor José Mata, the Minister of Finance, notified Whitehead that the present Mexican Government did not consider itself liable for the \$600,000 confiscated by Miramón.<sup>43</sup> The Committee of Mexican Bondholders, on hearing of Mata's statement, called a special meeting to discuss the effect of the Mexican government's decision on their investments. At this meeting, presided over by David Robertson,<sup>44</sup> a resolution was passed which provided that:

<sup>38</sup> *The Times*, March 15, 1861, p. 10, cols. 5, 6.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, March 19, 1861, p. 10, col. 5.

<sup>40</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, CLXII, 249, 350.

<sup>41</sup> *British Sessional Papers*, 330-332.

<sup>42</sup> Turlington, *Mexico*, 124.

<sup>43</sup> *The Times*, May 30, 1861, p. 7, cols. 1, 2.

<sup>44</sup> The fact that a member of Parliament was the chairman of the meeting clearly indicates the prestige and influence of the Committee of Mexican Bondholders.

The British Government be warranted by the principles of international law to intervene in Mexico to enforce the just demands of the Bondholders.<sup>45</sup>

If the Committee of Mexican Bondholders were the first to pass a resolution calling for intervention in Mexico, they were by no means the only ones favoring the idea. On July 19, 1861, Dubois de Saligny, French Minister in Mexico, had written to Edouard Antoine Thouvenal, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, proposing that England, France, and Spain seize the Mexican custom houses to assure the payment of their respective claims.<sup>46</sup> Ten days later the Mexican Congress by a vote of 112 to 4 passed a law which suspended all payments on the nation's indebtedness for a period of two years.<sup>47</sup> It was as a direct result of this act that the British Government on July 26, 1861, severed diplomatic relations with the Juárez administration.<sup>48</sup> Paradoxically the suspension of diplomatic relations for financial reasons occurred almost simultaneously with the arrival in Britain of \$317,020 in specie and bullion from Vera Cruz.<sup>49</sup> Though this treasure of private British mining associations was not connected with the claims of the Committee of Mexican Bondholders, it clearly was an indication of the vast wealth in Mexico at the height of the nation's bankruptcy.

When the news of the debt suspension reached England, John Delane wrote an editorial demanding that British arms be used to assist the Bondholders to recover their investments.<sup>50</sup> And on September 18, the Bondholders wrote Lord Russell demanding the intervention of British and French troops to protect their past investments.<sup>51</sup> Following this plea by the British investors, Lord Russell on October 7, 1861, wrote Henry Wellesley Cowley, English Ambassador at Paris, directing him to contact the French Minister of Foreign Affairs and inform him that:

The demands of the Three Powers [Spain, France, and England] must be drawn up with precision and care. They would comprehend the delivery of the Forts of San Juan de Ulloa and the Forts at Tampico to the Allied Forces to be retained by them until reparation for their wrongs is obtained.

<sup>45</sup> *The Times*, July 5, 1861, p. 5, cols. 1, 2. The research of this writer has not uncovered any intervention resolution enacted by other organizations prior to July 5, 1861. Thus, possibly the distinction of being the first belongs to the Committee of Mexican Bondholders.

<sup>46</sup> William Spence Robertson, "The Tripartite Treaty of London," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, XX (May, 1940), 168.

<sup>47</sup> *The Times*, August 30, 1861, p. 5, cols. 1, 2.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8, col. 3.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, September 6, 1861, p. 6, cols. 4, 5.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, September 18, 1861, p. 10, col. 3.

For this purpose the Custom Houses of Vera Cruz and Tampico must be placed unreservedly in the hands of Commissioners appointed by the Combined Powers.<sup>52</sup>

In the last week of October, 1861, representatives from Spain, France, and England met at London to discuss a military expedition against Mexico as a result of Mexico's failure to meet its contracted obligations.<sup>53</sup> On October 31, 1861, the negotiations ended, and European intervention officially began. Among the provisions in the London Pact of Intervention, the following was of chief importance to the Committee of Mexican Bondholders:

The troops will occupy Vera Cruz and the other cities on the coast where Custom-Houses are established. If, after a given delay, the Government of General Juárez has not paid up the money it owes, an advance will be made on the capital.<sup>54</sup>

With the beginning of armed intervention there did not immediately follow a return of the Committee of Mexican Bondholders' money. In fact the British citizens who had purchased the thirty-year Mexican Bonds in 1824 were not completely reimbursed until 1888—sixty-four years later. That story, however, is not within the scope of this paper. The evidence which has been presented in this essay clearly indicates that the Committee of Mexican Bondholders was a major factor in effecting European intervention. The constant pressure exerted by the Committee and their ally, *The Times*, on Lord Russell eventually bore fruit at the Tripartite Conference. The basic tenet of the Committee of Mexican Bondholders was that the British flag must follow and protect British investments. On October 31, 1861, after years of remonstrances to their government, the pleas of the Committee of Mexican Bondholders were finally heard. Intervention in their behalf was now to become a reality.

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<sup>52</sup> Robertson, "Tripartite Treaty," 173.

<sup>53</sup> Lord Russell was primarily interested in a military occupation of Mexico. For a severe censorship of the shady transactions of the British Foreign Secretary at the tripartite conference, see Karl Blind, "An English Government and the Mexican Republic," *Westminster Review*, CLXII (October, 1904), 357-365.

<sup>54</sup> *The Times*, November 7, 1861, p. 7, col. 5.

## The Founding Fathers and the Middle Ages

The reliance of the American founding fathers upon historical precedent is well known. No modern man, they argued, could understand his world unless he studied history. Such was especially true for republicans and democrats, who had much to learn from the mistakes of their predecessors, and the speeches and letters of the men who formed the federal government are studded with allusions to the classical republics. It was John Adams who suggested that the history of Greece ought to serve as an octagonal mirror, whose many sides would reflect the past and present, showing modern republics the defects present in themselves and in their predecessors, thus helping to remedy the defects. Who could understand republican government who did not know the history of Greece and Rome? Who could hope to avoid the problems that beset Athens and the Roman Republic unless he studied them in detail?

While the attraction of the founding fathers for Greece and Rome is both interesting and instructive, their distaste for what followed classical civilization is equally so. Few of the men who went to the federal convention, or who corresponded or advised with the men who did, showed any interest in the middle ages. Their thoughts ran to Greece and Rome as water runs downhill, and the ten centuries that separated the fall of western Rome and the Ninety-nine Theses was for them more remote than the ages of Pericles and Cicero. Thomas Jefferson spoke for most of his educated contemporaries when he styled the middle ages "the Dark Ages," and dismissed them as an arid era. "We have seen, indeed, once within the records of history, a complete eclipse of the human mind continuing for centuries," he wrote John Adams in his old age.<sup>1</sup> And Adams easily agreed. To him, feudalism and the middle ages was "A thousand years of barons' wars, causing universal darkness, ignorance, and barbarity, ended at last in a simple monarchy. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jefferson to Adams, September 12, 1821; in Andrew Lipscomb and Albert E. Bergh (eds.), *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Washington, 1905, XV, 334.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Francis Adams (ed.), *The Works of John Adams*, Boston, 1850, VI, 251.

In the booklists and recommendations for reading which they circulated among themselves and friends, neither Jefferson nor Adams, Madison nor Washington recommended many studies dealing with the middle ages. In his recommendations to friends and students, Jefferson passed easily from Plutarch and Tacitus to Robertson and Bolingbroke. He did so partly because literature on the medieval period was scarce, but largely because he felt that the whole era offered little in the way of instruction to his contemporaries. He preferred the histories of Greece and Rome in the ancient world, and those of France and England in the modern world.<sup>3</sup>

There were reasons for this. In almost every way, the Greeks and Romans appeared to eighteenth century men as more modern than their medieval counterparts. The Greek, at once so erratic and brilliant, and the Roman, shifty but constructive, offered both a lesson and an enlightenment that was not rivaled for the founding fathers by anything in the middle ages. The interplay of politics, the problems of national growth and development, the emergence of political theories and institutions, and the luster and accomplishments of famous men seemed clearer in a Greek or Roman setting. In short, to the founding fathers, the Greeks and Romans resembled eighteenth century men more than did medieval men.

The middle ages was a period of unity, or so everyone had been taught, but that unity was more apparent than real to the founding fathers. The medieval unity did not correspond to the unity of the Roman Republic. To the founding fathers, it was more a spiritual unity than a temporal one. The men of their generation thought in political and sociological terms, and this is the key to understanding their attitudes toward the middle ages. To them much of the middle ages seemed to be a wrangle over religious beliefs; the emphasis lay on faith rather than works, and the generation of 1789, schooled in war and revolution, preferred for its purposes to look to the latter for success in government and society. The only great political development of the period was the common law, and this seemed to the founding fathers to be in spite of rather than because of the medieval setting. Much of

<sup>3</sup> Jefferson, *Writings*, XVI, 124-129; *Ibid.*, XIX, 103-105; J. C. Fitzpatrick (ed.), *The Writings of George Washington*, Washington, 1939, II, 515-517; Gaillard Hunt (ed.), *The Writings of James Madison*, Washington, 1904, II, 132-134.

medieval life seemed to them to be the last bitter dregs of the Roman cup of tea, the final price paid by the successors of the Romans when they failed to maintain order and unity in their world.

The middle ages stood to the founding fathers as a rickety bridge spanning the chasm from ancient to modern times. Its contribution to government was feudalism, a system that seemed to be only an evasion of responsibility. Intrigued with government, the founding fathers thus tended to equate feudalism with medieval life, overlooking other aspects of the period. John Adams dogmatically asserted that everyone knew "the feudal system to be inconsistent with liberty and the rights of mankind."<sup>4</sup> The feudal law remained for him a "dark ribaldry of heraldry" which culminated in "the most mischievous of all doctrines, that of passive obedience and non-resistance."<sup>5</sup> The original colonists, according to Adams, had come to the new world to escape the remnants of feudal life that remained in Europe. "They detested all the base services and servile dependencies of the feudal system. They knew that no such unworthy dependencies took place in the ancient seats of liberty, the republics of Greece and Rome..."<sup>6</sup>

James Madison, who did considerable research on the subject of confederacies, and who was a close student of history, thought as little of medieval institutions as Adams. He looked upon medieval power politics as a long series of struggles between local lords who resisted the advances made toward governmental consolidation pursued by the greater nobles. The result was political confusion and social unrest. The situation seemed to him to have been chronic. "Had no external danger enforced internal harmony and subordination," he wrote in the 45th *Federalist*, "and particularly, had the local sovereign possessed the affection of the people, the great kingdoms of Europe would at this time consist of as many independent princes as there were formerly feudatory barons."

The middle ages might offend Madison's sense of harmony and Jefferson's sense of liberty, but to Hamilton the whole period was a lesson in the evils of disunion. The very feudal system carried within itself the seeds of its own destruction, for it created friction where none would have existed had there been unity.

<sup>4</sup> Adams, *Works*, IV, 455.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 454.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

"The consequences of this situation were a continual opposition to the authority of the sovereign, and frequent wars between the great barons or chief feudatories themselves." Nothing could better reflect the need for national unity. "This period of European affairs is emphatically styled by historians, the times of feudal anarchy."<sup>7</sup> To him, nothing so easily condemned the feudal economy as the welter of restrictions which had arisen as a consequence of this political disunion in the states of the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>8</sup> To Hamilton, the sum of medieval politics was confederation, and he saw nothing worth salvaging from it. Confederation failed where it needed success most, in the possession and dispensation of unified national authority, because it was based on the medieval idea of division of power among the component parts of the political system.

The separate governments in a confederacy may aptly be compared with the feudal baronies; with this advantage in their favor, that from the reasons already explained, they will generally possess the confidence and good-will of the people, and with so important a support, will be able effectually to oppose all encroachments of the national government. It will be well if they are not able to counteract its legitimate and necessary authority.<sup>9</sup>

It was with much uncertainty that the delegates met in Philadelphia during the hot summer of 1787. Could they frame a new government? Could this government be a republic, and would it last? In order to answer these questions and to guide their discussions they turned repeatedly to history and the lessons of past republics. None was more searching in his inquiry than John Adams. Racing against time in London, where he was on a diplomatic mission, he wrote the first volume of his *A Defense of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America*, in order to make his study of historic republics available to the delegates. He devoted much space to the Greek and Roman republics and concluded that they had much to offer in the way of precedent to any New American republic.

He also devoted much of his book to a discussion of the Italian republics of the middle ages, and found little solace in their examples. Their singular virtue seemed to be a warning not to repeat their histories. "The history of one is, under different

<sup>7</sup> Henry Cabot Lodge (ed.), *The Works of Alexander Hamilton*, Federal Edition, New York, 1904, XI, 132-133.

<sup>8</sup> See his *Federalist*, 22.

<sup>9</sup> See his *Federalist*, 17.

names and various circumstances, the history of all; and all, excepting two or three that are still decided aristocracies, had the same destiny, an exit in monarchy."<sup>10</sup> As far as Adams was concerned, not much of worth had survived from the welter of city states and duchies raised up in the name of republicanism in medieval Italy. "During [the middle ages], republics without number arouse in Italy; whirled upon their axles or single centers; foamed, raged, and burst, like so many waterspouts upon the ocean. They were all alike ill constituted; all alike miserable; and all ended in similar disgrace and despotism."<sup>11</sup> Thus they illustrated graphically for Adams and his contemporaries that out of medieval political disunity had come in the end the thing which they feared most—monarchy.

It is true that Adams wrote with a purpose, and that that purpose colored his selection of material and his judgments, but his conclusions generally reflected the thinking of his contemporaries. He thought the feudal system, especially as mirrored in the German principalities, the height of folly. "Nothing ought to have more weight in America, to determine her judgment against mixing the authority, of the one, the few, and the many, confusedly in one assembly, then the wide spread miseries and final slavery of almost all mankind, in consequence of such an ignorant policy in the ancient Germans."<sup>12</sup> He could never forgive the middle ages for not having produced a system of balanced government.<sup>13</sup>

Endeavoring to leave no stone unturned in his quest for historical insight, Madison likewise turned to the middle ages to examine its republics. He agreed with Adams that it was hardly worth the quest except to illustrate pitfalls to be avoided. His two lengthy research memoranda, which provided material for his remarkable speeches at the Federal Convention, were largely concerned with Greek and Roman history, but he also made notes on

<sup>10</sup> Adams, *Works*, V, 332. In writing the *Defense*, Adams consulted numerous authors, copied from most of them, and quarreled with all of them. He displayed knowledge of the work of a number of students of medieval Italian history, especially Machiavelli and Guiccardini, upon whom he drew liberally for his chapters on Florence. The whole thing seemed at times to be a satire. "Kings, nobles, and people claimed the government in turn; and after all the turbulence, wars, and revolutions, which compose the history of Europe for so many ages, we find simple monarchies established everywhere." *Ibid.*, IV, 297.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 217

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 298.

<sup>13</sup> For an elaboration of Adams' political philosophy and his ideas on balanced government, see Correa M. Walsh, *The Political Science of John Adams*, New York, 1915.

the fourteenth century Swiss confederation. He concluded that it was a *marriage de convenance*, and had little to bind it together; there was no common coinage; cantons were of different sizes; different kinds of government prevailed in different areas. To him, the whole thing provided "a striking proof of the want of authority in the whole over its parts."<sup>14</sup> He also weighed the Italians and found them wanting. Like Adams he looked to Greece and Rome, not to the middle ages, for proper examples.

As the delegates to the Federal Convention debated through the summer heat, they studied their remarks with allusions to the classical republics, hoping to discover precedents which would prevent error and which would light the path they were taking toward their new republic. They seldom turned with favor to any medieval examples. In pleading for a stable central government, Madison condemned confederation by comparing it to the "feudal licentiousness of the middle ages of Europe. . . ."<sup>15</sup>

Gouverneur Morris shortly rose to support the Virginian. He considered the German Confederation of his day a feudal relic and earnestly desired that its example be avoided in the new United States. The Germans were threatened not only by foreign powers but also by internal disunion. "From whence does this proceed? From the energy of the local authorities, from its being considered of more consequence to support the Prince of Hesse, than the happiness of the people of Germany."<sup>16</sup>

For Hamilton, the whole feudal period boded ill for effective government. With his predilection for strong central government, he admired the example of Charlemagne in the middle ages, but "The great feudal chiefs . . . exercising their local sovereignty, soon felt the spirit and found the means of encroachment, which reduced the imperial authority to a nominal sovereignty."<sup>17</sup> He thought that nothing better illustrated the course of all confederations, and nothing ought to be more sedulously avoided by the framers of the new constitution than such feudal divisions.

The one great surviving medieval political structure which illustrated the course of feudal politics to the founding fathers was the Holy Roman Empire, which Jefferson called "a burlesque on gov-

<sup>14</sup> Madison, *Writings*, II, 375-379.

<sup>15</sup> Max Farrand (ed.), *The Records of the Federal Convention*, New Haven, 3 vols., 1911, I, 448; Cf. *Ibid.*, 326, 449.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 552.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 285.

ernment. . ."<sup>18</sup> To them it was indeed neither Holy nor Roman nor an empire. Madison devoted most of the 19th *Federalist* to a discussion of its merits and demerits, and this pamphlet reflected the biting words he had used regarding it in the Convention itself. In medieval Germany, he reported, "The most furious private wars, accompanied with every species of calamity, were carried on between the different princes and states." The result was the disappearance of any unity which the confederation may ever have had. "In the eleventh century the emperors enjoyed full sovereignty: In the fifteenth they had little more than the symbols and decorations of power."

The German confederation of the eighteenth century had developed out of this medieval confusion, but to Madison it was little more than a false front disguising an aged and decayed structure. Even in the eighteenth century, according to him, it rested on the principle which had brought feudalism to grief—unbalanced and divided sovereignty—and consequently it was but a hollow shell, prey to quarrels within and foes without. He passed a harsh judgment on it and medieval politics in general when he wrote:

The history of Germany is a history of wars between the emperor and the princes and states; of wars among the princes and states themselves; of the licentiousness of the strong, and the oppression of the weak; of foreign intrusions; of requisitions of men and money disregarded or partially complied with; of attempts to enforce them, altogether abortive, or attended with a slaughter and desolation, involving the innocent with the guilty; of general imbecility, confusion and misery.

Only family pride and the weakness of the component parts held the Confederation together. The Holy Roman Empire stood for the founding fathers as a sad reminder of the confusion bred by feudalism, of the impossibility of union under anything like confederation, and of the lessons of medieval politics.<sup>19</sup>

At first glance it seems strange that the founding fathers should have so completely condemned feudalism. With its elaborate system of checks and balances that guaranteed certain liberties to servant and master alike, and in its elaborate precautions against usurpations of these basic rights, it contained some of the seeds

<sup>18</sup> Jefferson, *Writings*, I, 52.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Robert C. Binkley, "The Holy Roman Empire versus the United States," in Conyers Read (ed.), *The Constitution Reconsidered*, New York, 1938, 271-285.

of the constitutionalism and balanced government that the fathers were so anxious to establish.<sup>20</sup>

Their attitude can be explained partly by their almost complete lack of objective historical information dealing with the period from 800 to 1200. The strongest arguments against feudalism, however, were the "feudal relics" that survived in Europe, especially the Holy Roman Empire. The founding fathers agreed that the medieval period may have produced some advances in law, but feudal politics in action were simply too chaotic for them.

In the largest sense, the founding fathers disliked the feudal system because they did not believe that it had ever worked for the good of the whole people and had never lent itself to just government. The political power in the feudal system had been placed in the wrong place, among the nobles and kings, with no broader base of support and responsibility in the people as a whole. "The common people had no adequate and independent shares in the legislatures, and found themselves harrassed to discover who was the sovereign and whom they ought to obey, as much as they ever had been or could be to determine who had the most merit."<sup>21</sup> Thus, instead of producing the pyramid of loyalty and service which it envisioned, feudalism had brought faction and strife among the nobility, each contending for greater power, to the perpetual detriment of the people as a whole. Feudal economics, in hand with feudal politics, had bound the people to the soil and they were accorded no voice in their government. The whole feudal system was so intricately balanced that, ironically, it became unbalanced in operation. In theory it balanced political powers against each other; in practice, it pitted them against each other. That genuine democracy or representative government would have been too advanced for the medieval system seems never to have occurred to the founding fathers, who simply assumed that the failure to have either in the medieval scheme was the failure of the age, not the men.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Charles McIlwain, "The Fundamental Law Behind the Constitution of the United States," *Ibid.*, 3-15. Even John Adams was willing to admit that some good had been accomplished by the medieval nobility and that "the nobles have been essential parties in the preservation of liberty, whenever and wherever it has existed. In Europe they alone have preserved it against kings and people, wherever it has been preserved; or, at least, with very little assistance from the people.... By nobles I mean not peculiarly an hereditary nobility, or any particular modification, but the natural and actual aristocracy among mankind." Adams to Samuel Adams, October 18, 1790; Adams, *Works*, VI, 417.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 251.

When the new constitution was finished, Madison thought he detected traces of feudalism in it but felt that they would be negated by other aspects of the new system. He certainly hoped so. "And what has been the progress . . . of the feudal constitutions?" he asked of Jefferson. "In all of them a continual struggle between the head and the inferior members. . . ." <sup>22</sup> But he felt that the balance of power struck in the new federal constitution would avoid conflict; power would flow up from the "subordinate members," resting always on the consent of the people. Moreover, the careful division of responsibilities and powers in the three branches would not be permitted to dissolve into feudal anarchy if proper care were taken.

But politics was not the only subject upon which the founding fathers touched when they read history; they realized only too well that the law under which they lived was a product of history, especially English history. In their own minds, the founding fathers differentiated England from the rest of Europe in all things, and especially regarding the middle ages. John Adams knew only too well how much English law had developed during the middle ages. He had spent countless hours over the law books as a young man and the whole experience, arid in memory as well as in fact, led him to agree for once with Rousseau that the feudal system was "the most iniquitous and absurd form of government." <sup>23</sup> He looked with horror upon the twin products of medieval legalism, the canon and the feudal law. "Since the promulgation of Christianity, the two greatest systems of tyranny that have sprung from this original, are the canon and the feudal law." <sup>24</sup> He thought that a combination of lord and clergy had enslaved Europe for a thousand years. Though he admitted that English law was composed of a combination of classical and medieval precedent, he avowed that the former had been more beneficial than the latter. Out of the blending of heritages had come a law "which avoids the inconveniences, and retains the advantages of both." Appeals to medieval legal precedent left him cold, and he thought it only folly "to go back to the institutions of Woden and of Thor. . . ." <sup>25</sup> He looked upon Magna Carta and later legal developments as wise progressions away from medieval legal institutions.

<sup>22</sup> Madison, *Writings*, V, 25.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Zoltan Haraszti, *John Adams and the Prophets of Progress*, Cambridge, Mass., 1952, 80.

<sup>24</sup> Adams, *Works*, III, 449.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 298.

In that long and rich correspondence which passed between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, there are numerous references to the medieval saints and their writings. Both knew of such figures as Thomas Aquinas, Saint Jerome, and Saint Augustine, though their information came from secondary sources. Both men felt grievously handicapped by their lack of adequate reference materials on the history of the Church, and Jefferson lamented that his knowledge of medieval religious figures came only from haphazard secondary sources.<sup>26</sup> He was intrigued by ideas on the nature of the soul put forward by some of the saints but could not pursue the subject due to lack of sources.<sup>27</sup>

Both Adams and Jefferson looked upon the saints with a jaundiced eye. They were in the forefront of a generation skeptical of clerical activities, and they hardly accepted the miracles attributed to the saints. They felt that much of this was but an effort to sustain religious authority. Believing as they did that the middle ages was a time of clerical domination, they found only more evidence to condemn the period rather than to glorify it in their studies of medieval church figures. Neither objected to the lives of the saints and church fathers, it should be noted, so much as to the use to which they had been put by religious authority.

To the study of the lives of the saints, Adams applied the same intellectual diligence and sharp tongue that had brought more earthly flesh to ruin. Exasperation often outran scholarship as he read. "From all that I have read, of the legends, of the lives, and writings of the Saints, and even of the Fathers, and of ecclesiastical history in general, I have no doubt that the *Acta Sanctorum* is the most enormous mass of lies, frauds, hypocrisy, and imposture, that ever was heaped together on the globe."<sup>28</sup> A confirmed believer in the separation of church and state, Adams disliked the unity between the two in the middle ages. Indeed, it was this cooperation between king and priest that had initially soured his attitude toward the period.<sup>29</sup>

Like Jefferson, he hated the censorship and oppression which he thought abounded during the middle ages, and lamented the loss to scholarship of many pagan writings. In such sentiments he

<sup>26</sup> Jefferson, *Writings*, XIV, 14-20, 322-329; Adams, *Works*, X, 105.

<sup>27</sup> Jefferson, *Writings*, XV, 264-269.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, XIV, 322-329.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Adams, *Works*, V, 479.

was joined by others, who tended to identify the medieval period with clerical domination and usurpation.<sup>30</sup>

So biased and critical an attitude in the founding fathers is partially explained by the critical and unappreciative secondary histories available to them. Adams had thoroughly read Gibbon, Hume, and Robertson, and felt that their discussion of the medieval period was so prescient that he himself need not add anything to it.<sup>31</sup> Jefferson read and recommended Robertson's *History of Charles the Fifth*, which the author prefaced with a long introduction covering the period from the fall of Rome to the fifteenth century.<sup>32</sup> To Robertson, the two centuries after Rome's fall were the very nadir of civilization and he saw nothing but disorder in the feudal system that entrenched itself in Europe between 800 and 1200. However admirable it was in theory, he thought, it was politically chaotic in practice. "The bond of political union was extremely feeble; the sources of anarchy were innumerable," he said of the period of feudalism.<sup>33</sup> In the resulting tug of war between kings and nobles, Europe descended into the "Dark Ages."

An universal anarchy, destructive in a great measure, of all the advantages which men expect to derive from society prevailed. The people, the most numerous as well as the most useful part of the community, were either reduced to a state of actual servitude, or treated with the same insolence and rigour as if they had been degraded into that wretched condition.<sup>34</sup>

If the eighteenth century reader doubted Robertson's unfavorable view of the medieval period, he could turn elsewhere, but the judgement was not likely to be much less severe. In his celebrated *History of England*, David Hume drew a much more detailed and generally more sympathetic picture of England in the medieval period. Jefferson greatly disliked Hume's toryism but admired his style, and his work was immensely successful in his day. However much he admired certain aspects of medieval law, the social responsibilities inherent in the feudal system, and the chivalric ideal, Hume had little respect for the actual workings of medieval society.

<sup>30</sup> Adams, *Works*, VI, 480. Madison agreed that the separation of Church and State was a felicitous doctrine in which "the genius and courage of Luther led the way..."; in *The Letters and Other Writings of James Madison*, Philadelphia, 3 vols., 1865, III, 242-243.

<sup>31</sup> Adams, *Works*, IV, 298.

<sup>32</sup> Jefferson, *Writings*, XVI, 124-129.

<sup>33</sup> William Robertson, *History of the Reign of Charles the Fifth*, London, 2 vols., 1857, I, 13.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 14, 16.

It appeared to balance powers, yet "it was almost impossible to preserve harmony in its parts..."<sup>35</sup> Strife among the nobles ruined the system because "the loose policy, incident to the feudal constitutions, maintained a perpetual, though secret, hostility, between the several members of the state..." The lower elements of society were perpetually and purposely impoverished by the system. "A great part of them were *serfs*, and lived in a state of absolute slavery or villainage" while "The barons and gentry, living in rustic plenty and hospitality, gave no encouragement to the arts..."<sup>36</sup> In reading Hume, the founding fathers passed over his more favorable comments on the possibilities inherent in the medieval system and noted only that he seemed to agree with everyone else in a generally harsh judgement of the period.

In his history of the middle ages, published in 1818, Henry Hallam presented a wealth of detail which had either eluded or repelled his predecessors. He made a genuine effort to view the middle ages as a whole and his work corrected many erroneous judgments of the period. He presented a far more favorable view of the period than any previous scholar. While he admired some aspects of the feudal system and medieval politics, crediting them with having saved Europe from universal monarchy after the fall of Rome, he could not shake off doubts that the feudal system left much to be desired. "Though private wars did not originate in the feudal customs, it is impossible to doubt that they were perpetuated by so convenient an institution, which indeed owed its universal establishment to no other cause."<sup>37</sup> Socially and culturally, he divided the middle ages into two periods, the Dark Ages of 500 to 1000, and the later middle ages, which he admired, from 1100 to 1400.<sup>38</sup>

Both Jefferson and Adams knew of Hallam's work,<sup>39</sup> but it doubtless came too late to change their attitudes toward the medieval ethos. Hallam's respect for the common law, medieval culture, and the arts and life of the later middle ages could not disguise for the founding fathers what they considered the general confusion and intellectual aridness of the era. These and similar sec-

<sup>35</sup> David Hume, *The History of England From the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution in 1688*, London, 6 vols., 1800, I, 312.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 487-488.

<sup>37</sup> Henry Hallam, *View of the State of Europe During the Middle Ages*, London, 3 vols., 1853, I, 269. See his estimate of feudalism in *Ibid.*, 144-270.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 269-270, 316-317.

<sup>39</sup> Jefferson, *Writings*, XVI, 124-129; Adams, *Works*, VI, 563n.

ondary sources were the makers of their unfavorable attitudes toward the middle ages.

It was left to Thomas Jefferson to view the problem in its entirety. As has already been noted, he dismissed the middle ages as an arid waste, lumping ten centuries under the opprobrium "Dark Ages." The middle ages were to him the permanent encampment of the barbarians that over-ran Rome. There were many fallacies and false principles abroad in his own day and "All of these were legitimate principles in the dark ages which intervened between ancient and modern civilizations, but exploded and were held in just horror in the eighteenth century."<sup>40</sup> He held that the French Revolution, and that of his own countrymen, had been in some measure efforts to overthrow the surviving aspects of medievalism in modern life. To the end of his days he prided himself on his part in the abolition of the "feudal dues" of entail, primogeniture, and quit rents in Virginia. In saying all that he did about the middle ages, Jefferson merely repeated the attitudes of his educated contemporaries. He loved Greece and Rome more than the middle ages because he considered them more modern. It was not a coincidence that *Don Quixote*, the great burlesque on medieval institutions, was among his favorite books.

The key to Jefferson's dislike of the medieval period is his belief that it was an era during which the arts and sciences languished. Though he was by no means a slavish admirer of classical civilization, he found in it a growth and freedom which he missed in the middle ages.

Such were the attitudes of the founding fathers toward the middle ages. Often they were erroneous, just as their attitudes toward classical civilization were erroneous. But then, as now, what men think as well as what men know determines their actions and shapes their beliefs. This attitude is largely a result of the unfavorable treatment accorded the middle ages by contemporary historians. The very revival of classical literature and learning that had come with the renaissance seemed to be a repudiation of medieval art and culture. In his old age, John Adams enjoyed the romantic novels of Walter Scott, especially *The Lady of the Lake* and *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, but he never took them seriously. Indeed, he could not forbear injecting his politics into a discussion of their merits. "These Scottish and German romances show in a clear light

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<sup>40</sup> Jefferson, *Writings*, VII, 449.

the horrors of the feudal aristocracy," he wrote Benjamin Rush, "as the histories of Ghengis Khan and Tamarlane shew the same anarchy in the Asiastic aristocracy."<sup>41</sup>

Even if adequate and favorable secondary sources on the middle ages had been available to the founding fathers, it is doubtful that it would have impressed them as deeply as classical literature. The whole eighteenth century educational system was based upon the ancient classics; men's minds ran to Greece and Rome with the force of habit.

In fairness to the middle ages it must be noted that the founding fathers did not possess the rich store of knowledge available to later generations on the arts, literature, and cultural life of the middle ages. Had they known this, they too would doubtless have studied the era more closely. There were men and things in the middle ages that would surely have interested a Jefferson or an Adams.

The ancient world still seemed more real and more profitable for study to Jefferson's generation than did the middle ages. Tacitus seemed as modern as yesterday and Plutarch's *Lives* could have been written in 1789. Pericles and the power politics of the Peloponnesian wars seemed as real as any of the wars of Louis XIV or William III. The middle ages remained distant to the founding fathers largely because of medieval life itself. From any vantage point, it seemed radically different both from their own and from classical patterns of behavior. It remained for another Adams of a later generation, who perhaps needed unity more, to find the Good Life in the medieval unity. Such was not the case with the generation of his great-grandfather.

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<sup>41</sup> Quoted in Haraszti, *John Adams*, 16.

# Search for Fortune along the Mississippi

Pratt Letters, 1860-1861

Despite the feverish activities regarding the promotion of railroads, in the years just preceding the Civil War the Mississippi River remained the great commercial highway for the interior of the country. Along it passed a wide variety of produce, stimulating and nourishing the growth of many towns and private enterprises. After the admission of Minnesota in 1858 a solid tier of states bordered each bank, while multiplication of bulging warehouses and comfortable homes at many spots along its course testified to the local prestige if not always to the solid wealth of the owners. Not every man possessed the necessary qualities to wrest a fortune from the river traffic. In the prevailing enthusiasm of the era many men underestimated the degree to which patient, careful, experienced attention to detail proved the underlying clue to success, rather than spectacular seizure of sudden gifts of fortune.

To the person who would see the whole picture of business activities along the river, failure of a man to make the mark that he so confidently expected may also be an important indication of the conditions that prevailed in a given era. In Albert H. Pratt we see a very ambitious and optimistic young man, who first appeared in 1859 along the upper stretches of the Mississippi in the employ of the extremely shrewd and successful Milwaukee entrepreneur, Daniel Wells, Jr.<sup>1</sup> A series of letters subsequently unfolds the story of his determination to strike out for himself, but the pressure of the debt owed to Wells, the uncertainties of the produce market in early 1860, and his utter lack of capital forced him to seek employment which would guarantee him a salary. In these circumstances he decided to transfer the base of his operations

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Wells, Jr., (1808-1902) made his first trip to Wisconsin in 1835 to invest in lands, and the following year moved his residence from Maine to Milwaukee, then a town of 40 white inhabitants. For years he prospered as a surveyor, merchant, and owner of well-located stores, hotels, and warehouses. During 1853-1857 he served in the House of Representatives, where he proved adept at securing land grants for railroads in Wisconsin and Minnesota. In 1859 he was active as a grain dealer, owner of extensive lumber interests, president of several banks, and director of railroads and insurance companies.

farther down the Mississippi, and he fixed upon St. Louis as the most likely spot in which to quickly recoup his fortunes.

The place of Pratt's origin is uncertain; perhaps he was a transplanted New Englander like so very many of the young men who worked for Wells. Evidently he had no roots in Milwaukee, for he was unable to obtain a good position there, and the few names mentioned in his letters were those of prominent businessmen who were friends or partners of Wells. Possibly he had some friends or relatives in the nearby Wisconsin town of Racine, for he returned there during illness and while searching for employment, but his letters give no clue concerning home or family. As far as it can be traced, the business record of A. H. Pratt begins on May 28, 1859, when he appeared as bookkeeper for the new La Crosse and La Crescent Bank opened by Daniel Wells, Jr. in Hokah, Minnesota.<sup>2</sup> For some months he constituted the sole office force; and he hustled about, ordering a counter made for the office at a cost of \$25, overseeing the hauling of a safe from the steamboat landing, and arranging for a bed so that he could sleep in a small back room rented with the business quarters.<sup>3</sup> The amount of actual banking business transacted at this place was very small, for the bank had been brought into existence largely to facilitate advantageous purchase of produce from the Minnesota farmers, and to serve as a convenient observation post for the railroad and land speculations of Wells in this new state.<sup>4</sup> Hence Pratt's time was occupied chiefly with the purchase of grain, and the accounts show his drawing expense money for frequent trips to La Crosse and St. Paul, evidently in the interests of his employer.<sup>5</sup>

Pratt did not remain satisfied, however, with his salary of \$250 for a three month period, for toward the end of September, 1859 he left Hokah and the affairs of the La Crosse and La Crescent Bank.<sup>6</sup> During the next two months he ranged up and down

<sup>2</sup> Statement of Transfer of Capital Stock of the La Crosse and La Crescent Bank, located at Hokah in the State of Minnesota, dated May 28, 1859, and witnessed by A. H. Pratt. All manuscript citations are from the Daniel Wells, Jr., Papers in the Milwaukee County Historical Society of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

<sup>3</sup> Undated letter from Pratt to Wells, obviously soon after his arrival in Hokah.

<sup>4</sup> Statements of Accounts with La Crosse and La Crescent Bank, July 1 and September 20, 1859; Pratt to Wells, June 30 and September 2, 1859.

<sup>5</sup> Pratt to Wells, July 13, August 24, and September 2, 1859.

<sup>6</sup> Pratt's salary July 1–October 1, 1859, given in the Quarterly Report of the La Crosse and La Crescent Bank, dated September 20, 1859. Letter from J. Thomas Foster to Wells, September 19, 1859, shows he had already arrived to take over the duties of bookkeeper.

this section of the river, purchasing grain and distributing it for storage at La Crosse, Trempeleau, Winona, Hastings, and St. Paul.<sup>7</sup> Considerable new responsibility now devolved upon him, for he had entered into an agreement with Daniel Wells, Jr. and his brother-in-law, William Brown, Jr., of Milwaukee,<sup>8</sup> by which each of them was to receive one-third of the profits from the sale of this produce. Pratt continued to use the credit and business connections of Wells, but his expenses were only advanced and not guaranteed to him.<sup>9</sup> Thus all hope of profit for him depended upon his own judgement concerning the probable course of the market during the next few months. The prices which he paid to suppliers were based on quotations appearing in the *Milwaukee Sentinel*,<sup>10</sup> which he received two days late at points along the upper river. Since these transactions took place in the fall of the year, another major decision involved the question of how much to purchase after the close of navigation on the river, when much of the trade halted abruptly. Early in December, 1859, Pratt reported that he had transferred his activities to Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin and McGregor, Iowa; all traffic on the river had ceased, and he expected to cross over between them on foot. Here for the first time he expressed discouragement over sharp competition and a declining market; and he pleaded with Brown to telegraph him, daily if necessary, whenever changes occurred in the market prices quoted in Milwaukee.<sup>11</sup>

His restlessness and discouragement deepened, and early in January, 1860, Pratt wrote Wells that he wished to terminate their business arrangement, citing meagerness of profits for him and hinting at dissatisfaction with the policies of Brown. At the same

<sup>7</sup> Pratt to Wells, October 20 and 27, 1859; Foster to Wells, January 9, 1860.

<sup>8</sup> William Brown, Jr., (?-1862) was a former clerk for the American Fur Co. when he arrived in Milwaukee from Michigan in 1836; the same year he opened a store in the name of Brown & Miller. By 1839 he had married Susan Wells and was prominent enough to be appointed to the first Board of Commissioners of the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Co., which actually engaged in a general banking business. James S. Buck, *Pioneer History of Milwaukee*, 4 vols., 1876-1886, I, 91, 97, 232-233. *The Milwaukee City Directory* for 1859-1860 lists his residence, but no business address.

<sup>9</sup> Pratt to Wells, August 24, 1860.

<sup>10</sup> *The Milwaukee Sentinel* was founded 1837 as a weekly, and became the first daily paper in Milwaukee in 1844. Bayrd Still, *Milwaukee, the History of a City*, Madison, 1948, 67-68.

<sup>11</sup> Pratt to William Brown, Jr., from Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, December 2, 1859; Pratt to Wells, from McGregor, Iowa, December 20, 1859.

time he expressed his high hopes of entering a partnership with an established commission man in Milwaukee, while confessing that his great aim during the preceding months had been to demonstrate sufficient ability as an agent so that Wells would consider it worth while to give him a permanent place as a partner in one of his many business firms.<sup>12</sup> Later in the month Pratt was still carrying out some banking errands for Wells in Prairie du Chien, and sending quotations on produce from McGregor, but he acknowledged the existence of a debt to his former employer and patron, and presumably he was chiefly engaged in some personal speculations.<sup>13</sup> By March Wells evidently was pressing him for payment. This time Pratt wrote from Racine in a tone both deferential and pleading, emphasizing his own ill-health and the impossibility in current hard times of collecting money due him, but also refusing to sign a note covering the debt. At the same time he promised to repay in full, and asserted that if he could not obtain a suitable position in Milwaukee he intended to go "where I can."<sup>14</sup>

In his search for a place where he could utilize experience gained in the river trade of the upper Mississippi it is not surprising that such a young man thought of St. Louis. During the very same months Pratt's successor at Hokah, J. T. Foster, currently handling banking matters for Wells at La Crosse, kept urging the importance of St. Louis as a market for the produce of the region.<sup>15</sup> The advice was judged important enough for Wells to arrange an account that would facilitate currency exchange and credit for him in St. Louis.<sup>16</sup> Albert Pratt, however, could hardly have known of this particular development, for he had purposely avoided contact with Wells for some weeks, and he appeared confident that he could succeed in that city without a reference from his former employer.

There follow three letters from Missouri, covering a period of about six months in 1860, and describing business activities in St. Louis. In these Pratt's tone changes from the ebullience and brashness of a young man about to snatch up a fortune to one of ag-

<sup>12</sup> Pratt to Wells, January 8, 1860.

<sup>13</sup> Charles Ray, cashier of the Bank of Prairie du Chien to Wells, January 25, 1860; Pratt to Wells, January 18 and 26, 1860.

<sup>14</sup> Pratt to Wells, March 9 and April 18, 1860.

<sup>15</sup> J. T. Foster to Wells, March 1, 13, 19, 28, and 30, 1860.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Wells, Jr., was president and owner of the Green Bay Bank of La Crosse in 1860. Statement of Accounts for April 7, 1860, contains the first listing of an account with J. J. Anderson & Co., Bullion & Exchange Brokers, St. Louis.

grieved recital of business reverses, and finally to a plea for aid in extricating himself from an unfortunate plight.

Ironton, Missouri June 22, 1860<sup>17</sup>

My Dear Sir:

In justice to myself, and to you, I ought to explain my reasons for not fulfilling my agreement; "to come and see you as soon as I was able."

I was sick longer than I expected; and when sufficiently recovered to carry out my previous intentions, my money,—that I had of Mr. Inbusch to support myself until I could get a situation—was nearly exhausted.

The times were dull at the North, and St. Louis seemed to be the only place where I could hope for success. I had not enough money to defray my expenses to both places. I looked upon both as evils, and of the two, choose that which offered the best inducements.

I arrived in St. Louis May 2d reduced to my bottom dollar. There was no show for a salaried berth there, all kinds of business being very dull. I took it as coolly as possible, finally made a raise, & started in business for myself. Leased the "Terre Haute Alton and St. Louis RR" for the News Agency in company with "Buel" who once had the "La C [rosse] RR."<sup>18</sup> We pay \$500 per annum rent. At present it is very dull & pays only five to eight dollars per day. At an average, it will pay 2000\$ or 2500\$ per annum. During the State Fair and the Campaign we hope to clear between 500 and 1000\$. We are aiming to get all the words out of St. Louis, within the next year.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to this I have a traveling agency that pays me between two and three hundred dollars per month, and my expenses are very light.

"Durant and Co." St. Louis will corroborate my statement. "Durant" is Son in law of Cashier Scott of the St[sic] Bank.<sup>20</sup>

Now what I wish to ask, is this;—that you will not attribute to ingratitude or bad intentions, my failure to keep my promise. God knows I am grateful, very grateful for your many kindnesses, and if I know my own heart I meant nothing wrong. I have always tried to do what was right, and always shall. I have learned some useful lessons in the past few months. One of which is to use no mans capital but my own in carrying out my plans. Another—that I can do better to work for myself.

<sup>17</sup> Permission has kindly been given by the Milwaukee County Historical Society to publish the following letters. Except where otherwise indicated, they are given in full, with the original spelling and punctuation.

<sup>18</sup> A connection is possible with the family of Henry Buel of Red Wing, Minnesota, who wrote Wells October 19, 1859, to suggest that a son in business in St. Paul would be glad to buy wheat for Wells.

<sup>19</sup> The importance of timeliness in the receipt of news, including market prices, led to rapid expansion of news services. St. Louis in 1860 could boast of ten newspapers, while telegraphic connections had been established with the east as early as 1847. Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism: 1690-1950*, New York, 1950, 244-248, 283.

<sup>20</sup> The Milwaukee City Directory for 1859-1860 lists Moses S. Scott as cashier of the State Bank of Wisconsin, located in Milwaukee.

I will pay you as soon as I can, with interest satisfactory, and want you should give me a little time. Should have written before. But wanted to get into business first, & form some idea of my chances for paying my debts. This year if I have my health, I will draw between three and five thousand dollars besides paying every cent I owe.

If I have erred, Forgive me. For I wish to count you among my friends. I have loved and esteemed you as I never did man before, and if I have forfeited your friendship, I owe it to the fruit of the seed you sowed—my ambition. When last in Milwaukee and in need of a situation J. A. Noonan<sup>21</sup> wanted a Bookkeeper. He did not offer me the place, but called me "flighty." Of course I would not then ask it of him. While in St. Louis—he wanted I should come and see him—supposing that I was in Racine—reduced to an extreme that he could get me for a song. But he missed his man for once. He ought to have known me better. I certainly had a better opinion of him. I wish you to know how the matter stands—as he will probably give you a different version.

I go from here through the Southern and Southwestern portion of the State. I will probably return to St. Louis about the 1st of Oct. I hope to be able to pay you before that time & think there is no doubt but that I will. I shall visit you next spring if my business will permit, when I will account to you for the years business and adventures.

Give my kindest regards to Mrs. Wells & remember me kindly to Judge Pringle,<sup>22</sup> and believe me as Ever,

Faithfully yours,

Two months later Pratt confessed his prospects had been substantially reduced, as he revealed disappointments regarding his partner:

Hannibal, Mo. August 24, 1860<sup>23</sup>

My Dear Friend:

I returned to St. Louis a week since & found your letter. I am very grateful for your kindness and good wishes, & will try to deserve them. . . .

When I returned to St. Louis, I found that my partner in my RR business had become so elated with our success (we made at the start 10\$

<sup>21</sup> Josiah A. Noonan (1813-1882) was an experienced printer and newspaperman when he came to Milwaukee from New York in 1836. Very active in politics as a Democrat, he served as editor of the *Milwaukee Courier*, 1841-1845, and as Postmaster of Milwaukee 1843-1849 and 1853. In 1857 he retired from politics to devote more time to his paper mill, and he continued in related fields until his death. Lieut. Col. Jerome A. Watrous, (ed.), *Memoirs of Milwaukee County*, 3 vols., Madison, 1909, I, 433-436.

<sup>22</sup> Benjamin Pringle was associated with Wells in railroad and lumber speculations; he was evidently not a resident of either Wisconsin or Minnesota, but during 1859-1860 he spent some time in St. Paul in hopes of influencing the Minnesota legislature. Pringle to Wells, September 11, 1859, January 28 and February 8, 1860.

<sup>23</sup> The paragraph omitted recapitulates the conditions under which Pratt had accumulated the debt to Wells.

per day clear) that he went on one grand spree, raised the devil generally, let the sup't see him, in fact called him his nigger—& of course lost the road. It was quite a damper on me, for I was obliged to pay some debts & it took a good two thousand dollars out of my pocket for the year. I had set my mark at 4000\$ clear profit this year. But will fail to connect on that amount unless I strike some other business that I can combine with my present trade.

Remember me kindly to all & believe me

Yours very truly,

I go to St. Louis in a few days—will you not be there at the Fair?

After another wait of several months, the next letter revealed still more of his business ventures:

Paris, Monroe County, Missouri November 1, 1860

Dear Friend:

Can you not send me a recommend that if necessary will enable me to secure a position with the grain dealers of St. Louis. I wish to continue in that business & if I can furnish good recommends as to character, etc. there is a man in St. Louis who will give me a chance to get even should wheat continue to fall.

My partner left me in the lurch in my RR business & I lost considerably by him. I was also engaged as State Agent for a fine Sewing Machine—in which but with little trouble I could clear 10\$ per day. Now, just as I have got clear of RR obligations, the Supreme Court decides that our patent is an infringement. I am not discouraged. But it is very discouraging.

If I am worthy of a good recommend, you will confer a favor by sending me one, in the care of Durant & Co. St. Louis.

& oblige Yours Very Truly

Have just recovered from a severe illness (fever) & never was as well in my life.

Albert Pratt remained in Missouri for several more months, during which no record of further adventure remains. These were the eventful months following the election and inauguration of Abraham Lincoln, and the outbreak of the Civil War; they were also months of great uncertainty for the river trade, and many a successful and experienced man found the difficulties overwhelming. Early in the summer of 1861 Pratt abandoned his hopes of fortune in this area and returned to Wisconsin in a new and chastened mood. The next letter gives his final version of conditions prevailing in Missouri.

Racine July 1st, 1861

Dear Sir:

I returned to this place about a month since. Was obliged to leave Missouri in consequence of the troubles there.

As soon as I can get a Situation I will do what I can towards paying you. Should have done so before, but I could not make any collections before coming away, as there has been almost a famine in Mo. for a year, and the money I brought with me has been discredited. But I am getting used to hard luck and have learned to take it coolly. If the few I owe will wait with patience & faith I hope to be able to bring everything out right soon. The past two years have been full of bitter experience to me and I am now ready to settle down to anything that will pay board and clothes, and stick to it. If you know of any openings, (I don't care if it is breaking on a Railroad) be kind enough to inform me and you will oblige

Yours Truly,

One more letter written in 1861 seems to show that Albert Pratt had indeed learned his lesson, for he was willing to demonstrate the genuineness of his new resolves by accepting a minor position, with a salary much lower than the one he had considered inadequate two years earlier, when he was the bookkeeper for Daniel Wells, Jr. at Hokah, Minnesota. However, the familiar tone of optimism is still very much in evidence:

Chicago Dec. 22, 1861

Dear Sir:

I am informed that you were in Chicago a few days since, and made some Enquiries concerning me, but did not see fit to call. I conclude therefore that I have offended you, and regret it the more, because I have never wronged you,—or any other one—intentionally.

The last two years have been full of errors, but their reward has accompanied them. If they have developed the man, and made me more self-reliant, then have I gained. The rest is lost. Now, profiting by experience, I am trying to retrieve the Past.

Through the influence of your letter of recommend, (for which I have again to thank you) together with one from M. S. Scott, Esq. I succeeded in obtaining a Situation as bookkeeper in a Grocery house here, at a salary of 400\$ per year. It is commencing at the lower round of the ladder, but that I shall succeed in attaining the summit, I have no doubt. I have already a Prospect of advancing a step, by a change to a larger house. Should I make the change, I shall endeavor to make it permanent. In any event, I think my Salary will be increased on the 1st of January, in which case, I will use all possible self denial until I can liquidate my obligations to you.

Whenever you are in Chicago, and it is convenient for you to call, I shall be very glad to see you.

My kind regards to your family—and believe me

Yours Affectionately,

Here the record ends; whether Albert Pratt made a fortune anywhere, or even whether he finally repaid his debt to Daniel Wells, Jr. cannot now be known. Perhaps he settled down to become a solid businessman in Chicago, for the sole remaining bit of correspondence is dated from there in 1867; but it is merely a hasty note of introduction for a friend who sought a position in the lumber business, and it reveals nothing concerning his personal affairs.<sup>24</sup> In any case, however, it is unlikely that Albert Pratt ever forgot the stirring years of 1859-1860 and his adventures while seeking his fortune along the Mississippi.

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<sup>24</sup> Pratt to Wells, May 23, 1867.

## Book Reviews

*Crown and Parliament in Tudor-Stuart England; A Documentary Constitutional History, 1485-1714.* By Paul L. Hughes, Robert F. Fries, eds. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959. Pp. xvi, 359. \$6.95.

The teacher of English history, both by choice and necessity, must put great emphasis upon constitutional development and the use of relevant documents. Various one-volume and multi-volume collections of important documents, covering all or subdivisions of England's history from Anglo-Saxon times to the present, have long been readily available to teacher and student. When another appears, it must prove its worth by being sufficiently different and useful to supplant existing works.

*Crown and Parliament in Tudor-Stuart England*, by two professors of De Paul University's history faculty, makes good claim either to supplant or at least to supplement some of the books now being used. It treats a fairly narrow field of history, 1485-1714, a period of intense constitutional development. Because perennially there is a strong interest in the Tudor-Stuart era, the limitation to these two hundred and twenty-nine years permits greater concentration on depth. The documents chosen by the editors, covering the range of legal, political, ecclesiastical and economic, are placed chronologically in chapters divided by reigns from Henry VII to Anne, including the Interregnum. At the beginning of each chapter is an introduction, which in every case is well written and shows that the authors possess a real familiarity with the constitutional developments of the period treated. Each individual document also has a brief explanation pointing out its relevance. One finds very full citations from the legislation of Henry VII, the varied laws, so pregnant of future importance, of the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary, the significant ecclesiastical and economic legislation of Elizabeth I, and the most important legal enactments which in sum total represent the fundamental constitutional changes of the Stuart era. Over half of the book, in fact, is devoted to the period 1603-1714.

What impresses one is the care with which the authors determined the extent of the documents to be quoted; they are given in sufficient length (and with modern versions of spelling) to be useful for classroom use and as a handbook for undergraduate and graduate work alike. For those who have learned their constitutional history through such a biased work as M. R. Tanner's *Tudor Constitutional Documents*, the present book will prove refreshing because of its lack of prejudice. One finds only details of interpretation rather than any major point of interpretation or of fact with which to disagree. Although this reviewer is tempted to criticize here and there the choice and the omission of a few documents, he feels that the judgement of the two editors must prevail, considering the limitations of space and the validity of their experience in teaching constitutional history.

The over-all conclusion is that this book must be viewed as very serviceable to teachers and to both undergraduate and graduate students. It

must further be added that the volume is attractive in appearance, that it contains a minimum of typographical errors, and that the structure of the book (which includes an index) represents careful planning to make it very useful to the reader. The bibliography at the end, of both general and special works on Tudor-Stuart history, is another recommendation of the serviceability of this volume.

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*Alexis de Tocqueville in the Chamber of Deputies. His views on Foreign and Colonial Policy.* By Mary Lawlor, S.N.D. Washington, D.C., The Catholic University of America Press, 1959. Paper. Pp. xi, 201.

Last year, commemorations marking the centenary of Tocqueville's death gave evidence of the increasing interest in the remarkable French thinker. This dissertation on Tocqueville's career in the French Chamber of Deputies is directed toward a neglected area in the field of Tocqueville studies. The sub-title indicates the scope of the work with its concentration on an analysis of Tocqueville's speeches and of his reports on foreign and colonial policies during his deputyship in the Chamber under the Bourgeois Monarchy. For this material, the author has relied on the Beaumont edition of Tocqueville's *Oeuvres complètes*, the volumes published thus far in the definite edition by J. P. Mayer, *Le Moniteur Universel*, and articles by Tocqueville in *Le Siècle*.

After the Revolution of 1830, the young magistrate in the Court of Versailles gave allegiance to the new regime as the only valid political possibility for France at the time. In his first candidacy for the legislature in 1837, Tocqueville was defeated; his career as a deputy began with his election in 1839, four years after the publication of the first volume of his famous *Democracy in America*. He served as a representative from La Manche until February 1848, when another revolution of greater portent swept away the Bourgeois Monarchy. The author begins with a description of Tocqueville's entrance into politics in which she emphasizes his insistence on being a free man without party or commitments. She devotes succeeding chapters to the Egypto-Syrian phase of the Eastern Question, the Right of Search, Slavery in the French Colonies, and Algeria. Appendices are included.

The crisis over the Eastern Question which led Tocqueville to urge the government to go to war if necessary, rather than permit the powers to regulate the Question without France, reveals him as an "ardent nationalist." His plea for a strong foreign policy went unheeded; and the real goal of his speech on the Right of Search—negotiations with England to abolish the slave trade by abolishing the market—was not achieved. When Tocqueville's views roused some opposition in England he disclaimed any responsibility for the deterioration in Anglo-French relations. Tocqueville's correspondence with his English friends, John Stuart Mill, Nassau William Senior, and Henry Reeve, as presented here, throws light on the

positions on both sides of the channel. When the Ministry shelved his report to the Chamber of Deputies on slavery in the colonies, Tocqueville turned to the press. Six articles calling for the abolition of slavery appeared in *Le Siècle* in 1843. His comments and advice on Algeria show his continuing interest in the problem. Though Tocqueville did the unusual by ultimately supporting the government's compromise bill regulating slavery and was willing to support its policy "on the neutral terrain of Africa," here again, the action of Louis Philippe's government disappointed him and his recommendations bore little fruit.

This informative study fills a gap in the literature on Tocqueville. But some readers might wish further enlightenment on the motives of the do-nothing government in certain instances and a more explicit concluding discussion on the opening question, "How close is the correlation between theory and practice in politics?" To the reviewer, some of the judgements, such as the thesis stated in the preface that "an intensive nationalism was the core of his political thought," might be questioned. Also, examination of the extent of Tocqueville's commitment to imperialism would probably qualify the assertion that he "was an imperialist." If Tocqueville's query as to the time and method of ending slavery is "one of the few examples of [his] practical questions during this period," one may wonder whether these speeches and reports disclose "an urgent practicality" as a facet of his character. The dissertation, however, is an interesting contribution to the story of Tocqueville, the deputy.

MARGARET M. O'DWYER

Loyola University, Chicago

*Lincoln Finds a General*, Volume Five. By Kenneth P. Williams. Macmillan Co., New York, 1959. Pp. 395. \$7.50.

Kenneth P. Williams, the Indiana University mathematician turned historian did not live long enough to finish the last two chapters of this volume. On July 1, 1958, he retired from his teaching career with the title of Distinguished Service Professor of Mathematics. On September 5, 1958, he died, after having outlined Chapters X and XI of Volume V, but before he was able to write them. Chapter X would have been concerned with the battle of Chattanooga, November 24-25, 1863; Chapter XI would have included an account of Grant's receiving his commission as Lieutenant General from President Lincoln on March 8, 1864. On that date Lincoln would have found his general and Williams might have felt that the record was complete, because in his preface to Volume One he had declared that "Lincoln's chief military problem was to find a general equal to the task the north faced in the Civil War."

However, had he lived it seems perhaps more likely that Professor Williams would have written not only two more chapters but also two more volumes, both concerned with the last year of the war and including Sherman's campaigns in 1864 and 1865 as well as Grant's sustained campaign against Richmond. We would then have had a very comprehensive history

of the major phases of the military history of the federal armies in the Civil War. Although not entirely finished, this set has been described as "a major work of scholarship written in the grand style on a grand scale." Volumes I and II, published in 1949, covered the campaigns in the East from the outbreak of the war in April 1861 to the victory of the North at Vicksburg on July 4, 1863. Volume III, which appeared in print in 1952 told of Grant's early career, of the campaigns including Shiloh and Corinth and the first efforts to take Vicksburg. Volume IV, published in 1956, related the story of the campaigns culminating in the capture of Vicksburg.

This volume gives us detailed accounts of the federal defense of Helena, located on the Mississippi some distance north of Vicksburg, and the surrender of the Confederates at Port Hudson also located on the Mississippi but south of Vicksburg. The volume ends with the defeat of Rosecrans at Chickamauga on September 20, 1863, and with the plans of Grant to go to the rescue of Rosecrans, besieged in Chattanooga. Throughout each chapter, one detail is given after another with the result that the reader has a very graphic picture of every event described. This is very true, for example, of the Battle of Helena, July 4, 1863, the day that Vicksburg fell to Grant. We learn that the successful Union defense of Helena was the result not only of the soldiers and land batteries concerned but also of the gunboat *Tyler* firing at the Confederates from its position in the Mississippi River. We learn that some of the Union troops took from some of the captured Confederates the "reliable muzzle loading Enfields" of their captives and used them instead of the "poor breech-loading carbines" formerly used by those same Union soldiers.

The notes given at the back of each volume are exceptionally detailed, many of them extending over more than a page and some of them for two or three pages. The *Official Records* are used continuously as are also contemporaneous newspaper accounts as well as scores of other primary and secondary sources. Admittedly not easy reading, the volumes by Kenneth P. Williams will nevertheless give you a comprehensive view of the military phases of the Civil War which you will perhaps get from no other writer. His five volumes have become an essential part of the history of the Civil War.

PAUL KINIERY

Loyola University, Chicago

*Gallant Pelham, American Extraordinary.* By Charles G. Milham. The Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C., 1959. Pp. 250.

When on May 6, 1863, the *London Times* reported that the shell which killed Major John Pelham "... extinguished one of the purest and bravest spirits which [had] been yielded up in this desolate war," it expressed the conviction with which one concludes Charles G. Milham's *Gallant Pelham, American Extraordinary*, one of the best recent publications on the War Between the States. The work is all the more remarkable because it was

written, not by a native southerner, as its sympathetic treatment would lead the reader to believe, but by a native of New York who spent most of his life in the state of his birth.

To collect his material, the author visited all the places with which the "boy hero" had had contact, and interviewed more than forty people who had known him. He searched the historic record, and found hardly more than passing references to one who was considered Lee's greatest artillery genius. Even a search for Pelham's letters proved almost fruitless, for most of them have disappeared. It is remarkable that, in view of these circumstances, Milham was able to reconstruct so complete and detailed an account.

John Pelham was born in 1839 near Jacksonville, Alabama. Descended from English nobility who had settled in Virginia, he counted among his forebears individuals who had held high rank in earlier American wars, and among immediate family connections such persons as John Singleton Copley and Henry Clay. His father was a planter and John, along with his brothers, spent most of his early life out-of-doors. Selected for West Point at the age of eighteen, he was a student there when the war began. Pelham was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Confederate Artillery and ordered to Virginia. He soon found himself under the immediate command of J. E. B. Stuart with whom he is said to have experienced "... one of the most notable associations of military minds in the war." Later, he was almost as intimately associated with Thomas J. Jackson and Robert E. Lee.

As commander of Stuart's horse artillery, the gallant Pelham fought twice at Manassas, through the Peninsula Campaign, and at Sharpsburg and Fredericksburg. Official records show clearly that it was Pelham's guns, skillfully placed and accurately aimed, which played a major part in bringing victory or averting disaster. Stuart looked upon him as "all but brother," and referred to him as "... the noble, the chivalric, the gallant Pelham." Both Jackson and Lee frequently spoke and wrote of him, not as colorfully, but equally as sincerely. At twenty-four John Pelham died at Kellysville, a battle so minor that it would hardly be noted, had it not been the occasion of his death. His body lay in state in the Confederate Capitol, and was escorted to the train by representatives of the Confederate Government. He lies buried among members of his family at Jacksonville.

Charles Milham spent many years on this work, but died before its publication. The biography is presented, not in a dry historic manner, but in a more popular style which makes reading pleasant and easy. Careful examination of the text, documentation, and bibliography convinces one that historic truth is not violated. If, in the plethora of Civil War literature with which we are being deluged, we find other works equally as valuable, accurate, and readable, we shall indeed be fortunate.

KENNETH M. JACKSON

Loyola University, Chicago

*We the People, The Economic Origins of the Constitution.* By Forrest McDonald. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., 1958. Pp. viii, 436. \$7.50.

Since the publication of Charles A. Beard's *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*, a veritable storm has raged in historical circles over its accuracy. Beard, unwittingly it seems, fathered a school of historians who vigorously preached and defended his "interpretation." With equal vigor Beard's critics challenged his position and accused him of interpreting the past for the benefit of the Progressive Movement, at the peak of its popularity the very year this essay was first published. Some few, in an effort to discredit his hypothesis, even went so far as to attach the epithet "Marxian" to his work. But the stronger the denunciation, the more firmly did the thesis seem to take hold. Ultimately, all students of American history were obliged to genuflect before it, reverently or irreverently. The first systematic analysis of the methodology of the thesis came with the publication of Robert E. Brown's *Charles Beard and the Constitution*, in 1956. The present study by Forrest McDonald is the latest and most significant entry in a growing bibliography on this subject.

The Beard thesis can be viewed in three ways: as propaganda, as a form of historical methodology, or as history. The present study considers it under the last heading accepting without qualification Beard's system of interpretation and his method of testing it. In short, the author takes the Beard hypothesis—that economic elements were the prime motivating factors in the writing and ratification of the Constitution—and applies it to the material, asking the very questions which Beard said would have to be asked before his thesis could be proven conclusively. The result is an exhaustive analysis of the economic interests present during the drafting and ratifying of the Constitution. The personality and reality of each individual associated with this process are carefully and fully delineated. Dr. McDonald's conclusion was that: "On all counts . . . Beard's thesis is entirely incompatible with the facts." (p. 357)

Such a conclusion, of necessity, makes the work essentially negative in character. An hypothesis has been tested and found totally inadequate. The importance of a work of this type can be measured only in terms of the significance which is attached to the thesis it attempts to analyze. If the Beard thesis is no longer accepted as a meaningful interpretation of the Constitution, the present work is unnecessary. A cursory examination of any textbook in American history will reveal that such is not the case. The Beard thesis, although somewhat less popular than it was in the decade of the thirties and earlier, still has a significant following in American historical circles. The present work, a complete, total, and devastating refutation of Beard's position, is of utmost importance, for subsequent studies of the Constitution must be cast in the image of its conclusions.

The positive aspects of this monograph, although comparatively brief, are also worthy of note. Toward the end of his study the author raises two significant questions. Is there another economic interpretation (besides Beard's) that might be advanced as a tenable thesis to explain the Con-

stitution, and what conclusions, if any, on methodology and the entire concept of economic interpretation of historical phenomena can be drawn from this analysis? In answering the first question the author maintains that this study indicates quite clearly that: "It is . . . not even theoretically possible to devise a single set of alignments . . . that would explain the contest (i.e. the writing and ratifying of the Constitution) as one in which economic self-interest was the principal motivating force." (p. 398) As to the second question, he challenges the usefulness of any methodology which begins with a single, all-embracing hypothesis, endorsing instead an inductive approach which recognizes the pluralistic forces at work in any historical phenomena. This, I suspect, is the methodology he intends to employ in the subsequent volumes on this subject referred to in his Preface.

With the removal of the Beard thesis as a meaningful criterion for analyzing this period, the way is now opened for a new and fresh interpretation. Dr. McDonald has the first and strongest claim on the subject. When that new analysis is made economic factors will undoubtedly be an important part of the story, but they will never be elevated to the unique position given to them by Beard and his followers. Dr. McDonald, with this singular example of scholarship in depth, has destroyed the Beard thesis and made a distinct contribution to American historiography.

JOHN J. REARDON

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*A Guide to American Catholic History.* By John Tracy Ellis. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1959. Pp. viii, 147. Paper. \$2.50.

This very servicable implement for the study of the history of the Catholic Church in America from 1492 to 1959 has its contents arranged in what Monsignor Ellis thought would be the most convenient form. The ten larger sections are: published Guides to materials and bibliographies; Manuscript Depositories; General Works in Catholic history; Studies in Diocesan, Sectional, and Parish History; Biographies, Correspondence, and Memoirs; Histories of Religious Communities; Education; Special Studies, under nine classifications; Periodicals; and Catholic Historical Societies. The items are numbered consecutively from 1 to 814. There is an unusually detailed index which simplifies the task of finding authors and books and classifications of materials. The modest price should make it readily available to students.

JEROME V. JACOBSEN

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## Notes and Comments

*Sources of Our Liberties*, edited by Richard L. Perry, under the general supervision of John C. Cooper, was published last September by the American Bar Foundation and is distributed by New York University Press and by Associated College Presses. This contribution amply fulfills the purpose stated in the Foreword by Mr. Cooper: "To present in a single usable volume the historic documents constituting the major legal sources of our individual liberties." The need for this book has long been felt and several notable attempts have been made to satisfy it in part by publications of some of the documents. The Committee on American Citizenship of the American Bar Association, headed by Mr. Cooper, proposed that the scattered documents be brought together and assigned the task to the American Bar Foundation, the research affiliate of the ABA. The Sloan Foundation made two grants to bring the project to this happy conclusion. The research by a number of authorities was directed by Mr. Perry who composed the excellent introductions to the thirty-two documents presented. Half of these are from Thorpe, five from Pickering, three from Tansill, three from *United States Statutes*, and the others from various source books.

The careful and pertinent selections from Magna Carta through the English colonial charters, the Revolutionary Congresses, and the Constitutions of the new States to the First Ten Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, establish legally that the individual liberties of American citizens depend upon historic laws "limiting the authority and discretion of men wielding the power of government." Each of the documents is thus a foundation stone "on which the structure of our individual liberties has long stood." Mr. Perry places each stone in its proper position. Each introduction follows the same form, giving the origins of the document, its contemporary and later significance, and its effects. In the margins of the wide pages are the paragraph topics in italics. The footnotes contain all one would wish for further study. The type and format is excellent. A selected bibliography and good index complete the volume in 456 pages. The work has value for all citizens, and many values for scholars, lawyers, justices and legislators. It is listed at the reasonable price of five dollars.

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After some years of diligent research Dr. Alberto Francisco Pradeau of Los Angeles, California, has brought forth his documents and study on the expulsion of the Jesuits from their missions in northwest Mexico and southern Arizona under the title *La Expulsión de los Jesuitas de las Provincias de Sonora, Ostimuri y Sinaloa en 1767*, published in 1959 by Antigua Librería Robreda, José Porrúa e Hijos of Mexico City. The paper bound work gives complete details of the suppression of the Society of Jesus as it was carried out in this one sector of the vast Spanish Empire.

In the seven hundred miles of mountainous and desert area between Sinaloa and Tucson, Arizona, Dr. Pradeau found forty-eight missions and *visitas* under the care of fifty-two Jesuit fathers, many of whom were from central Europe. He gives biographical sketches of each of these exiles. The first block of documents contains the royal decree of February 27, 1767, ordering the Conde de Aranda, President of the Council of the Indies, to draft all instructions and to issue orders to all colonial officials for the arrest and exile of every Jesuit in his colonies. Aranda's long instruction of March 1 specified in twenty-nine articles the procedures for the removal of the fathers from their missions, colleges, universities and parishes and for the confiscation of their properties. The utmost secrecy was to prevail. The sealed orders reached Viceroy Marqués de Croix on May 31 and were sent by special post to the officers in Sinaloa and Sonora. Croix ordered each to open the packet on June 25 and to arrest the fathers simultaneously in the night of June 30. The following morning the Jesuits were prisoners on the roads to ports of embarkation. Many of the missionaries died en route or in jails. Governor Pineda's official reports and letters of the arrests and journey written by the fathers follow. The long journal heretofore attributed to Father Sterkianowski is now proved to be that of a Father Jaime Matheu who organized the narrative from writings and verbal accounts of exiles passing through Spain. All in all, this is a solid book, well annotated, a contribution to the history of the Pacific States and an authoritative work on the tragic event in the long history of the Jesuits.

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*The Papers of Henry Clay*, Volume I, *The Rising Statesman*, 1797-1814, edited by James F. Hopkins and Mary W. M. Hargreaves, Associate Editor, was brought forth December 6, 1959, by the Uni-

versity of Kentucky Press, Lexington. This is the first of ten volumes of a truly monumental work and everyone aiding in its production should receive rousing congratulations and deep gratitude from the legions of scholars to whom it will forever be a boon. The modest introduction of the Editor reveals the astonishing nature of the task to be performed, and a study of any one of the papers exemplifies the meticulousness with which the rules for editing are being followed. This volume includes Clay's incoming and outgoing correspondence from the time of his arrival in Kentucky as a young lawyer in 1797 to the end of 1814, when as American Commissioner he co-signed dispatches of the Treaty of Ghent. The papers include all personal business papers, legislative proposals, reported speeches, and his personal diplomatic contributions. The editors omit or summarize items of a non-personal nature, as land deeds, court files, and suits in which he partook as counsel. The original autograph items had to be found, filmed, classified, and used as checks against later copies or printings, an enormous task. A descriptive note follows each entry. More, footnotes placed within the entry identify persons, places, and special subjects. The mechanical part of the editing indicates tremendous patience. The type is beautiful, a revival of the Baskerville, cut about 1760. The binder has done a notable service in pressing the 1037 pages into a pliable form and a Bradford Buckram cover. The list price is reasonable, fifteen dollars.

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*Mexico 1825-1828: The Journal and Correspondence of Edward Thornton Tayloe*, edited by C. Harvey Gardiner, is published by The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill. When Joel R. Poinsett went to Mexico as United States Minister to the new republic he took with him as private secretary Edward Thornton Tayloe of the prominent Virginia family. Tayloe, twenty-two years old in 1825, just out of Harvard where his studies were undistinguished, was not on salary. His father paid his expenses, hoping to land a diplomatic appointment for his son. The three years which young Tayloe spent in Mexico ended his diplomatic career. He subscribed to Poinsett's policy of meddling in the internal affairs of the country and of seeking commercial gains for American companies. The only fruit of his stay is his journal and letters which Professor Gardiner here presents in a well-printed illustrated volume of 212 pages, including an ample index. Tayloe traveled some

2000 miles, chiefly examining mines, and he described all the physical features of mountains, towns, mines, roads, and farms, the beautiful and the annoying of Mexico, just as has been done by numerous tourists before and since. He never enters into the thoughts of the "amiable" but "miserable" people, whose Catholic religion he repeatedly holds in contempt. He made one mistake of criticising the governmental officials in a letter to his brother who had the remarks published, and thereafter Tayloe gave no valuable information, not even the reasons for Poinsett's "resignation," as he terms the recall. The book will be favorable to all who have visited Mexico. Its list price is \$5.

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*Bluegrass Craftsman, Being the Reminiscences of Ebenezer Hiram Stedman, Papermaker, 1808-1885*, edited by Frances L. S. Dugan and Jacqueline P. Bull, was published last October by the University of Kentucky Press. Born in 1808 near Boston, Ebenezer Hiram Stedman began to write his memoirs in the form of letters to his daughter in 1878, and the papers together with his two manuscripts on the history of papermaking gathered dust until the two enterprising editors brought them before the public in this neatly printed volume. Since Stedman wrote phonetically his spelling, grammar, and punctuation are abominable, and all credit must be given to those who typed the copy, set it in print, and proofread it. The "Bluegrass Craftsman" was a noted papermaker in Kentucky. His father had moved the family from Massachusetts and had set up the business of making paper about 1823. In the face of fires and floods and innumerable hardships, each recounted stoically by Stedman, he and his brother carried on the state's biggest paper industry until the Civil War reduced Stedman to bankruptcy and forced him to seek new work in Texas. His rambling, repetitious recollections of people, places and events will be read with mingled enjoyment and sadness by Kentuckians, and they will prove interesting to many general readers. Scholars, however, will be wary of trusting the memory of the septuagenarian, but they may well pay heed to the footnotes of the editors. Just before taking leave of Kentucky Stedman wrote a short history of the craft of papermaking in early Kentucky, the "Buisness that I have bin engaged in, for the last fifty years." This is published as an appendix of

eleven pages. The book runs to 226 pages including a brief index and is listed at five dollars.

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There is a very beautiful map in the James Ford Bell Collection of the University of Minnesota. Recently added to the other items on the Portuguese discoveries and trade in Africa, India, and Brazil, the map or chart was drawn by Jorge Reinel about 1534 to illustrate the development of trade and navigation and to indicate the commercial rivalries of the time. This has now been reproduced in a handsome brochure by Philip W. Porter entitled *Benin to Bahia*, with a descriptive sub-title, "A Chronicle of Portuguese Empire in the South Atlantic in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, with Comments on a chart of Jorge Reinel." The foreword is by John Parker, Curator of the Bell Collection. After chronicling the expansion of commerce from the time of Prince Henry, Professor Porter tells what is known of the famed cartographer, Jorge Reinel, and gives an interpretation of the meaning of the chart. Altogether, this is an attractive and interesting brochure.